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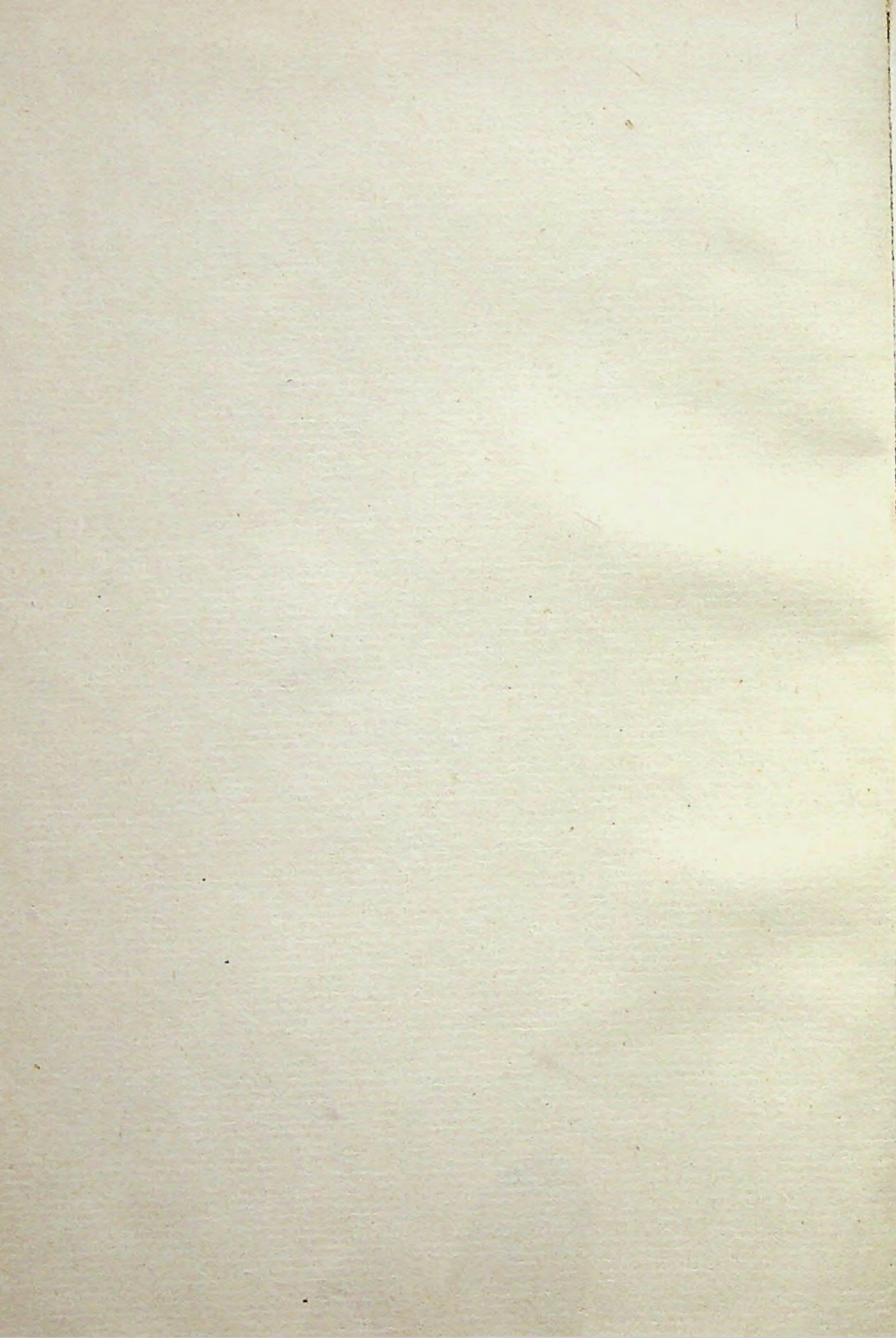
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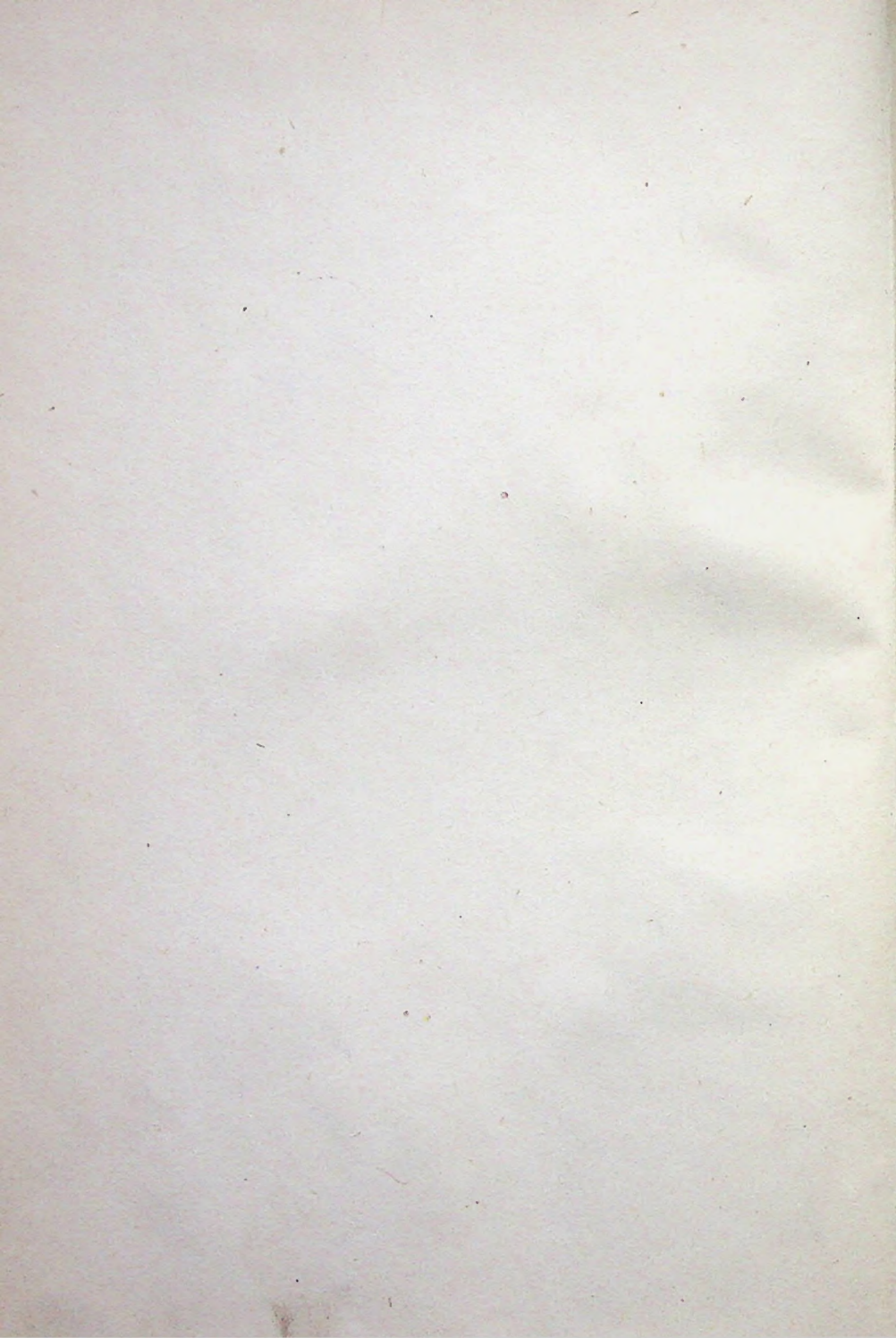


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# J. KRISHNAMURTI AND SANT KABIR

A Study in Depth

ROHIT MEHTA  
SHRIDEVI MEHTA

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS PVT. LTD.  
DELHI

*First Indian Edition: 1990*

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Also available at  
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS  
Chowk, Varanasi 221 001  
Ashok Rajpath, Patna 800 004  
24 Race Course Road, Bangalore 560 001  
Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110 007,  
120 Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Madras 600 004

ISBN: 81-208-0667-0 (Cloth)

ISBN: 81-208-0668-9 (Paper)

PRINTED IN INDIA

BY JAINENDRA PRAKASH JAIN AT SHRI JAINENDRA PRESS, A-45 NARAINA INDUSTRIAL AREA,  
PHASE-I, NEW DELHI 110 028 AND PUBLISHED BY NARENDRA PRAKASH JAIN FOR MOTILAL  
BANARSIDASS PUBLISHERS PVT. LTD., BUNGALOW ROAD, JAWAHAR NAGAR, DELHI 110 007.



# CONTENTS

Introduction . . . . .	vii
CHAPTERS	PAGE
I Beyond the Frontiers . . . . .	1
II The Ground of Negation . . . . .	9
III The Measurable and the Immeasurable . . . . .	17
IV The Experience of Discontinuity . . . . .	23
V Look Not Behind . . . . .	31
VI The Obstinate Duality . . . . .	37
VII The Choiceless Awareness . . . . .	45
VIII The Flame Without a Smoke . . . . .	53
IX Alone—But Not Lonely . . . . .	61
X Freedom from Bondage . . . . .	69
XI Look, Look: You Have Nothing Else To Do . . . . .	77
XII The Unholy Alliance . . . . .	83
XIII Awareness and Attention . . . . .	89
XIV The Regenerative Silence . . . . .	97
XV Untouched by the Known . . . . .	105
XVI The Joy of Innocence . . . . .	113
Appendix: The Songs and Couplets of Kabir . . . . .	119





## INTRODUCTION

FROM KABIR TO KRISHNAMURTI (referred to in the book as Krishnaji) is a far cry. For, they are separated one from the other by over five centuries. But quantitative measurement of this distance in terms of time is extremely mis-leading. This distance has a qualitative aspect which cannot be measured in any time-scale. Two great seers lived in two completely different worlds—with no comparison between the two. And yet they expressed their thoughts and experience not only in a similar language but almost in identical terms. In this book we are not so much concerned with looking at Krishnaji's philosophy in an exhaustive or a detailed manner. Nor are we concerned to examine Kabir's approach to life at length or in a systematic manner. That is not the purpose of this book.

In these two streams of thought represented by Kabir and Krishnaji, we have noted a fascinating parallelism. These streams run parallel to each other—and yet they meet from time to time. These are the intersections between the two approaches to life. At these intersections they meet and again move along their own distinctive ways. Their teachings seem to be similar and yet they are different. We have been interested in these intersections of two streams of thought and expression. And in this book we have focussed our attention on these meeting points between the two approaches to life.

So far as Kabir is concerned, the contribution in this book is mainly by my wife, Shrimati Shridevi Mehta. She has compiled and collected the songs and poems of Kabir. Not only that, she has adapted them to music, the classical and semi-classical style of North Indian music. But more than that, she has sung these songs to a large and varied audiences spread over the five continents of the world—Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe and the United States of America. Those who listened to these musical renderings were thrilled and could not believe that five hundred years ago there could have been a seer who was so deeply versed in the depths of human psychology. I and my wife have evolved a special technique of presenting a subject through musical discourses. My wife would sing and I would supplement the music with my comments. It has proved very

successful. And among our various musical discourses, which we have presented to people all over the world, Kabir is a must. In this book we have presented the intersections between the writings and sayings of Kabir and Krishnaji. In the appendix we have presented the songs in the original Hindi language and in the order in which they appear in the text. They have been translated into English for the benefit of non-Hindi knowing readers. There has to be a free translation because word for word translation is impossible, nor would it sound pleasing. The Hindi version has been given for those who can understand that language. A translation, however lucid and faithful can never take the place of the original. As the songs in Hindi are in the same order as they appear in the text, their inclusion would be a distinct advantage. Kabir was introduced to the English-knowing people by the translation of Rabindra Nath Tagore, the great and illustrious poet.

Both Kabir and Krishnamurti are truly revolutionary in their approach. They appear almost iconoclastic and completely non-traditional. It is this which is common to both the approaches. This would make the teachings more acceptable to the modern age. Both Kabir and Krishnamurti insist that no dogmas or creeds should emerge out of their teachings. Kabir said :

Diamonds are not found in heaps  
The fragrant sandalwood trees do not  
grow in rows,  
Lions do not move in herds,  
The spiritual man has no followers:(50)

Unfortunately with the passage of time, the followers of Kabir have made his teachings imprisoned in creeds, dogmas and sects. Will this happen to Krishnamurti also? His friends and admirers will have to be very careful to see that such a thing does not happen. But it is like walking on a razor-edged path. Let us hope that teachings of Krishnamurti are not imprisoned in dogmas and creeds.

That this should not happen is the most essential thing for keeping his teachings pure and unsullied. This will require putting his teachings in proper perspective. We have tried to give this perspective so that Kabir is seen in a perspective of Krishnamurti and the latter in that of the former. A thing, a teaching, lives when it is seen in the proper perspective. So far as Krishnamurti is concerned it is necessary to see his teachings in the perspective of ancient wisdom and modern thought. It is this perspective that imparts to the teachings vitality and a liveliness—



without which the teachings become dead. No teachings get blurred and lifeless by exploration—they get vitiated by interpretation. To see the teachings in perspective is to keep them pure and unsullied. It is with this intention of exploration that we present Kabir and Krishnamurti in the perspective of each other. We hope that many such attempts will follow so that we are able to preserve the freshness and the liveliness of these most precious teachings that humanity has inherited. It is the humanity's most precious treasure.

ROHIT MEHTA





# I

## BEYOND THE FRONTIERS

KABIR AND KRISHNAMURTI, two outstanding personages of human history, were separated from each other by the time-span of over five centuries. They lived in two different worlds. Kabir lived at a time when outer conditions of life were changing but very slowly. In his time the world witnessed a slow shift in values—the old was imperceptibly giving place to the new. India of his days was being influenced by currents of thought that came from outside. The ravages of industrialism and mechanistic way of life were still far away. But such was the sensitive nature of this great seer that he could sense what was in store. He could perceive what was to come, and he warned the people about it in his own characteristic way.

What Kabir sensed, Krishnamurti saw, for, the latter was born and lived in an age when the ravages of industrialisation and the inroads of mechanisation had entered all walks of life. The cracks in the civilisation, built through science and technology, were visible. The values which had sustained humanity for thousands of years were crumbling down. Life was fast losing its meaning and the human individual was being reduced to a state of total insignificance. The powerful voice of Krishnamurti was raised against this total destruction threatening human civilization.

Kabir was a simple man, born in a Hindu family but brought up in a Muslim household. Evidently the Hindu family was very poor, unable to bring up this child, and so he was left near a lake where the child was picked up by a Muslim weaver in Varanasi (Banaras). Kabir grew up in a weaver's family picking up the art of weaving, probably in a street corner as is the wont of weavers in the ancient city of Varanasi even to this day. He was a "local" man living in Varanasi and its vicinity. The only language that he knew was Hindi. But he must have been a great genius, for while engaged in weaving, he composed songs that even to

this day, inspire thousands of people. Such was the beauty of his poems and songs that the poet Rabindra Nath Tagore translated them into English. He gave profoundest philosophy in the simplest language.

Krishnamurti—lovingly known as Krishnaji—was a personality internationally known even during his life time. He was a much travelled man who visited many countries in Asia, America, Europe and Australia, addressing thousands of people on life and its subtle problems.

Kabir's teachings have two aspects—one the occult or the psychic, and the other, the spiritual or the mystic. By and large, the students of Kabir have regarded the first as more important and the mystic aspect only as secondary. In Krishnaji, however, one comes across pure unadulterated mysticism. His was a non-dualistic approach. Kabir too was fundamentally mystic and therefore non-dualistic in his approach—and it is this which is most interesting to the students of Kabir and Krishnaji. For Kabir sensed and Krishnaji saw the dangers of industrialisation in all aspects of social life. They saw the dangers of de-personalisation. The problem of human relationship was the main theme in the writings of both Kabir and Krishnaji. In his numerous addresses, throughout the world, Krishnaji dwelt on the varied aspects of human relationship and its degeneration. Kabir said in one of his very well-known couplets:

The life where there are no stirrings of love is comparable to a cremation ground. Just as the bellows of a blacksmith have a process of breathing in and breathing out, but with no vitality. (1)

In such mechanical process of breathing, one may see the existence, but without any living quality in it. Relationship without love is a mere existence. To live and to exist are two completely different things. Under the impact to mechanisation a human being may show forth great technical capabilities but in such an existence there is no perfume of living. Krishnaji wrote:

They were all professionals. One said he was a scientist, another a mathematician, another an engineer—they were specialists, not overflowing beyond their boundaries as the river does after heavy rain. It is the overflowing that enriches the soil.

It is by specialisation and over-specialisation that we judge the worth of a human being. Man today has put boundaries on one's living. The frontiers and limits have all been defined. There is a precision in delimiting the frontiers. But there is no act of overflowing. In fact, such



overflowing is regarded as unscientific and therefore unreal. Love exists only in overflowing, when it breaks all barriers. Kabir says in another couplet:

Every one has gone upto their limits and boundaries, no one has crossed over the frontiers. Kabir plays in the open spaces that have no boundaries. (2)

It is to this land without frontiers that Kabir invited all to come; it is to this joy of overflowing that Krishnaji called those that seek the meaning and purpose of life. This seeking is possible only when the frontiers within which the human mind functions are transcended. The human mind sets its limits and wants to find reality within these limits. If it cannot find reality within these frontiers, it comes to the conclusion that it does not exist. Kabir said in one of his couplets:

He who is prepared to set fire to his home,  
let him come with me. (3)

To set fire to home—not to the house—that is the condition which Kabir puts before the spiritual aspirant. The home is the centre of attachment, whether good and noble or not good and ignoble. There is really no question of good or bad, for these classifications are made by the mind which itself is caught in the dualities of good and bad. Both Kabir and Krishnaji speak the language of paradoxes. Speaking about God, Krishnaji says at one place:

'If you have proof of the existence of God, then it is not God.'

Does God exist or does He not exist? Neither existence nor non-existence—that is what Krishnaji speaks about. If the mind says that it can prove the existence of God, then it is talking about its own projections. Kabir says in one of his songs:

I am neither religious nor am I irreligious,  
I am neither a believer nor a non-believer. (4)

One may ask: If neither religious nor irreligious—then what? The human mind gets completely bogged down in these negations. Many people have said that Krishnaji's teachings are an endless string of



negations. Is this so? Is Kabir, too, nothing but negations? This is not so, as we shall examine in the subsequent pages. God has been the most positive assertion of man from the remotest ages whose one effort has been to prove the existence of God. But Krishnaji says that if you can prove the existence of God then it is not God at all. How is this paradox to be resolved, and both Kabir and Krishnaji are full of paradoxes. Our minds are accustomed to move along the path of either/or. But when something is presented to man which cannot be put in the framework of either/or—then he is completely lost. It is this language of paradoxes that makes it difficult to understand Kabir or Krishnaji. A paradox cannot be solved by the mind, it gets resolved. But how? This is the secret of knowing both Kabir and Krishnaji.

But then the highest truth has been expressed in paradoxes even in the ancient wisdom, both in the East as well as the West. The *Bhagavad Gita* in its Fifteenth Discourse, while describing the tree of life, says that it is both Perishable and Imperishable at the same time. The words used here are *Ashvattha* and *Avyaya*.

If neither this nor that—then what? This question does arise. After all choice demands accepting or rejecting. This or That. It neither has validity, then how is choice possible—and without choice how can man act? But the question arises—who chooses? Obviously the choice is done by the human mind, and the mind chooses out of its likes and dislikes. Thus choice arises out of confusion and conflict. Krishnaji says:

Choice exists only when there is confusion.

When the mind is not confused there is no choice.

There is direct perception.

Both Kabir and Krishnaji have again and again harped upon the limitations of the mind. In fact, mind is the one factor referred to throughout the teachings both of Kabir and Krishnaji. It is this which makes their teachings most relevant to the age in which we live. Ours is pre-eminently a civilisation of the mind. Kabir in his time heard distinctly the foot-steps of the "mind-civilisation". The mind functions under certain inherent limitations. It is these limitations that are involved in its choice. The choice is made under the stress of conflict of dualities. It is guided not by perception but by projection. This projection is out of the memory of past events and experiences. Memory acts under the impact of unfulfilled desires of the past; while the mind can choose well in non-psychological matters, it is totally undependable when psychological factors of life intervene. Kabir says in one of his

songs:

Mind, where do you want to go. There is no path ahead nor is there a traveller. I advise you to stand still where you are.(5)

The mind of man may be clever but it is unable to see. It can invent things but it cannot discover. Today the mind of man has invented many gadgets. It is proficient in manufacturing machines and tools. It has created high technology which can achieve wonders in the field of computerisation, but it is a complete stranger to love. Krishnaji says:

The man who knows how to split the atom but has no love in his heart becomes a monster.

We see in the present world all sorts of monstrosities perpetrated by the man of technology. We have created a civilisation where the mind is very clever but where the heart is completely dry. Within its legitimate limits the mind can function with great efficiency, but outside those limits it is completely blind. This blindness does not allow it to perceive what exists. It is not true that love is blind—in fact it sees more. It sees what the mind cannot perceive. The wrong perception by the mind naturally entails wrong action.

The modern man wants action—he is action-oriented. But right action demands right perception. The problem of modern civilisation is the problem of right perception. There is no doubt that right action will follow as naturally as night follows the day if there is the ground of right perception. The problem is fundamentally philosophical, or more truly psychological. Surprisingly, the approach both of Kabir and Krishnaji is not moral or so-called religious. It is the problem of perception. But here perception is not just the act of seeing or observing. As someone has rightly said—it is not the eye that sees, it is the mind that sees. It is the seeing by the mind that is discussed both by Kabir and Krishnaji. Perception is not a gradual process, spread over time. It is instantaneous. That which is perceived gradually is fragmented in the process—and a fragmented perception has no quality of wholeness in it. Life is a whole at any moment, everywhere, and so its perception has to have the quality of wholeness in it. And so Krishnaji says:

Probably there must be the capacity to see the truth in a flash—and I think the very perception will cleanse the mind of all the past in an instant.



In fact, perception in the true sense of the term is identical with understanding. It is not that one perceives and then understands. Perception is understanding. Shankaracharya, the great mystic philosopher of India in his well-known book *Viveka-chudamani*—the Crest Jewel of Wisdom, says:

The true nature of a thing is known only in a state of awakened perception.

In Krishnaji's teachings there is a constant mention of observation. But this observation is not by the mind and its movements in the sphere of duality. He often used to say:

When the movement of the mind ceases then the movement in the mind begins.

True perception comes during this movement in the mind. What we usually call "understanding" is the result of mind's judgment arrived at by calculation or by measurement. It is born out of the movement between the two dual points of acceptance and rejection. It is not along the third way which is not a compromise between the two dual points. It is a movement entirely along a new dimension, not perceptible to the mind. This new dimension is arrived at instantly, for it does not belong to time which moves along the axis of the past and the future. Krishnaji says:

Understanding comes swiftly, unknowingly when the effort is passive, only when the maker to the effort is silent does the wave of understanding come ... there is the flash of understanding, that extraordinary rapidity of insight when the mind is very still, when the thought is absent, when the mind is not burdened with its own noise.

Perception itself is understanding and the true action emerges in the ground of perception—all else is a mere reaction. Perception comes only along the third way about which the *Bhagavad Gita* speaks in its Second Discourse where it is said:

Neither acceptance nor rejection that is where the mind is well-established—in a state of harmony.



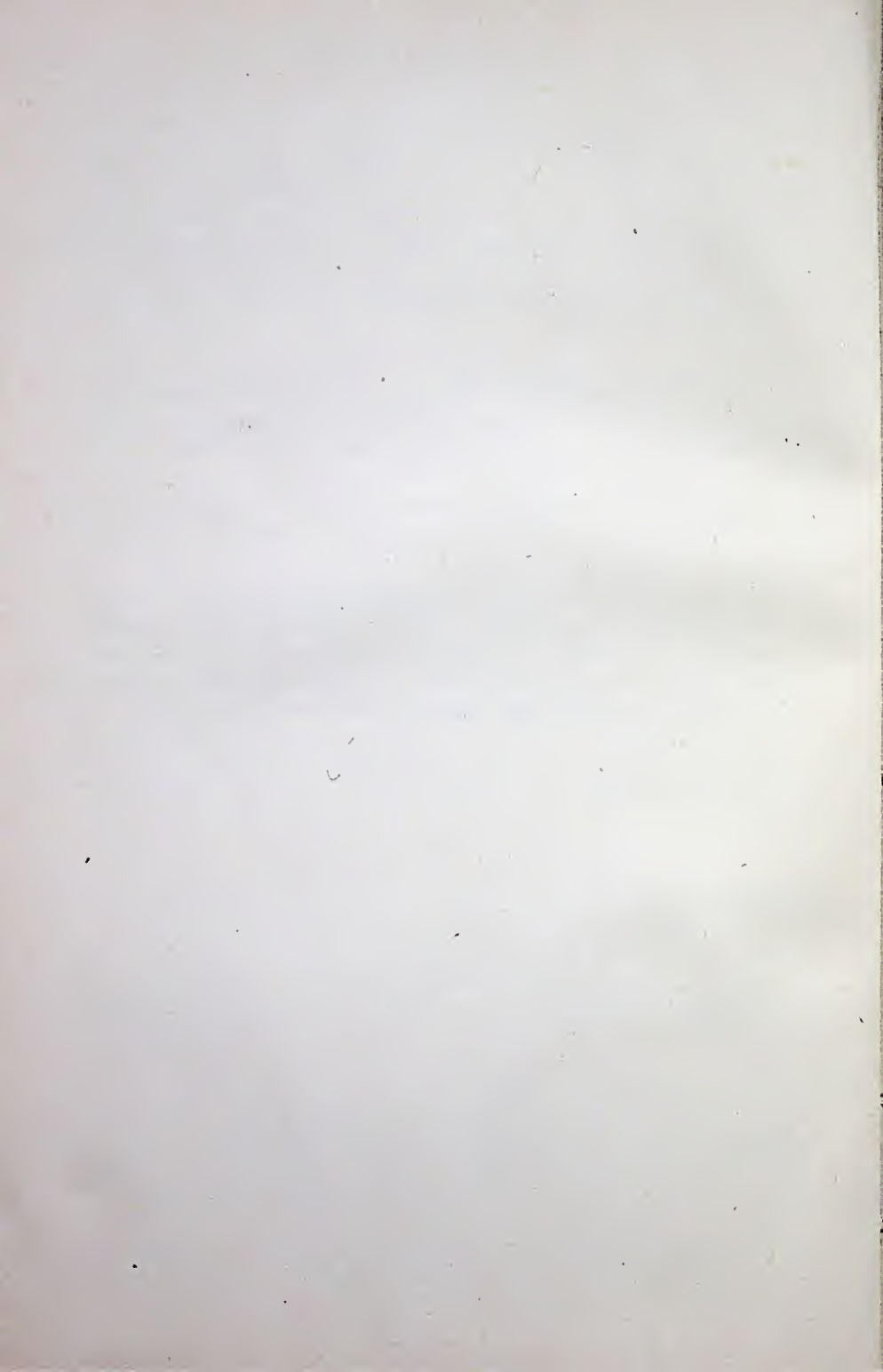
The mind without a movement of its own—that is indeed the ground in which alone action can take place. Krishnaji very often used to say: 'Love and do what you will.'

This is because love is not born out of activity of the mind. It takes birth where all activity of the mind has ceased maybe for a split second or maybe longer. Time is irrelevant so far as the experience of love is concerned. Love is not of the mind but arises from beyond the mind. Kabir said:

Everybody stays within the limits of the mind—no one has transcended the limits of the mind. Those who have gone beyond the limits of the mind, they alone know the joys of life.

Kabir and Krishnaji speak of transcending the limits of the mind. There alone right perception comes and right perception is action—it is the ground of true understanding.

There must be an exploration of this region beyond the mind. We shall in the subsequent pages, go along this journey of exploration—not the journey of interpretation. To explore is to perceive what is and what comes. This exploration is very fascinating. Both Kabir and Krishnaji invite all to move along this journey of exhilarating experience.



## II

### THE GROUND OF NEGATION

MANY PEOPLE who had listened to Krishnaji for years, believe that Krishnaji's teachings contain nothing but negations and therefore they are very simple and easy to follow. He speaks of no *gurus*, no authority, no discipline, no belief, no organisation, no scriptures and such other negations. These people left all these but felt no better because no belief became another belief, no organisation became an organisation in itself. In place of no authority, Krishnaji himself became a new authority. We have seen earlier that Krishnaji's approach has no basis in moral injunctions, the do's and don't's of moral precepts. His approach is fundamentally psychological. His inquiry is not—what to do and what not to do—but why does one do this and why does one give up that. This is the peculiar and special emphasis in his teachings. This is completely different from the teachings of most teachers and philosophers.

We have chosen to discuss the deeper aspects of the teachings of Kabir and Krishnaji, not because they are identical. They are not; they differ from each other in many respects. They follow their own line of thinking and thus differ from each other in many respects. And yet, moving along their respective and independent line of thinking their approaches constantly intersect. After touching each other, for a while, they pursue their own independent lines. We are interested in these intersections. These meeting points are extremely fascinating, for thinking independently they come to common meeting points and again move along their own distinctive ways, until they meet again. Thus, these two teachings are diverse and yet they are similar. The points where they meet and intersect are most interesting, and, worth a deep inquiry and understanding. Kabir is both traditional and non-traditional. Krishnaji is supremely non-traditional, coming down heavily on all traditional approaches. Both Kabir and Krishnaji are similar and yet different. It is this which makes this study interesting.



It is true that Krishnaji deals with all problems with the air of negativity. And yet his teachings are not negative in its nature and quality. In fact, his teachings are fundamentally positive in nature and content. People have said again and again that Krishnaji brushes all things aside and does not give anything positive to work upon or to hold on to. They complain that he does not give anything positive to act upon. Most teachers have spoken of certain virtues as a positive base to work from. And so one gets engaged in developing virtue after virtue. But Krishnaji says:

The man who cultivates virtue is not virtuous . . . In virtue there is freedom, not in becoming virtuous.

If in virtue there is freedom then is not the act of becoming virtuous an act leading towards freedom? It sounds quite reasonable to assume that the process of becoming virtuous is a process leading towards freedom. Here Krishnaji introduces a subtle question of being virtuous and becoming virtuous. Being and becoming is one of the finer aspects of his teachings.

To be virtuous and to practise virtue are two completely different things—they are indeed contradictory. By practising virtue one does not become virtuous—in fact such practice results in one living with an inflated ego. It makes a person more self-centred. Behind all practices of virtue there is a motivation. It is the motivation to achieve something—to be better than others, to achieve happiness, to become self-controlled etc. In all motives there is a self-expanding activity and as a result of this practice one does not become virtuous. To be virtuous and to strive to become virtuous are two completely different things. It is in the cessation of the activity of becoming virtuous that one is truly virtuous. Surely this is against all canons of religious and so-called spiritual tradition and discipline. In all religious disciplines an aspirant is asked to build virtue after virtue in his character. To build virtue after virtue is regarded as the central theme of all spiritual discipline whether in the East or in the West. Now building virtue after virtue in one's character is a time-consuming process. It is in the course of time that one can build several virtues in one's character. But Krishnaji says that time creates disorder. Kabir says in one of his poems:

O teacher, what am I to do? When I conquer lust then anger increases, when I suppress anger, then greed comes up. When I triumph over greed then delusion comes. When delusion lays low

then pride raises its head. When pride is eliminated then envy and jealousy appear. When I say that I have conquered all the six vices then all of them come back again, one by one. How am I to be free from all these attachments? (6)

Here Kabir has pointed to a very pertinent psychological process. These attachments of life cannot be got rid off gradually in the course of time. Krishnaji says:

If there is any interval of time between the challenge and the response, that interval creates the problem. Whether I am investigating the cause or trying to resolve the cause, the interval has already created a problem.

Vices and weaknesses cannot be removed one by one—they go away all at once, suddenly, not in the duration of time. That is what Krishnaji says. That is what Kabir says in the above poem. They go away all at once—but that is not what the religious tradition speaks about. We are told that the removal of weaknesses is a long process, entailing arduous struggle, spreading over a life time, or perhaps many life times. What is one to believe?

Krishnaji says—there is only one virtue and one vice—not many as is supposed. There is one vice and that is the presence of the “I”, the self, the ego. Where the self or the ego is not present, that indeed is the virtuous life. All efforts at self-improvement are sought to be made by the self, and thus the so-called self-improvement is the strengthening of the self-same “I”. The “I” seeks to improve itself in order to strengthen itself. Thus all efforts at building virtue after virtue in one’s character is to protect the self-same “I”. It is an effort to maintain its own security. Thus all practices towards leading a virtuous life are self-defeating. To be engaged in practising virtue after virtue is the strengthening of the self-enclosing wall of isolative “I”. There is no wonder that the so-called spiritual man is more self-centred than an ordinary man. He is more attached to the “I” than perhaps the ordinary man—for he is hugging tightly to his self-hood.

Krishnaji says that in meeting the challenge fully and totally without creating an interval between the challenge and the response that one creates a climate in which problem can find no sustenance. Kabir says in the above poem that it is verbalization which gives a fresh lease of life to the problem. It is verbalization which sustains it.

But then the question arises : How to stop verbalization? Is this not a



process where the struggle with the problem is only shifted? Whether one struggles against a problem or against its verbalization makes no fundamental difference. The struggle still remains—and the struggle involves time. If time creates disorder then such creation of disorder still persists. We are still caught in the same whirlpool.

For this it is very necessary to understand what is time? Obviously time denotes a movement of going from here to there. It is this movement which is time, whether it is rapid or slow. But the question arises what is here and what is there. Do we know what they are, or are they mere concepts of the mind? If it is just a concept then surely it has no intrinsic existence. It is a mere figment of imagination. If so, this movement from here to there has no reality. Kabir says in one of his couplets:

He who sees the nature of the mind is above time—time does not affect him at all.

Here Kabir has spoken of a profound truth which physical science, since Einstein, is beginning to realise. Time has no independent existence. It is the observer who creates time. Time varies according to the position which an observer takes. Thus time is the creation of the observer's angle of perception. Change the angle of perception and the time scale changes. There is no time *per se*. If the movement from here to there is itself fictitious, then the problem itself has no reality. It is the angle of perception which constitutes the problem. That is why Kabir says—"Stay still where you are"—for that seems to be the only relevant advice that one can give towards the solution of a psychological problem. Our problems are mainly psychological, not physical. In the development of virtues the effort of man is to move from here to there. The problem is not to redefine "Here or There", but the actual movement.

Our usual concept of a spiritual life is a change in the pattern of behaviour. It is this which constitutes the movement of spiritual or religious life. And it is this movement which seems to be frustrating. It demands tremendous effort involving ceaseless resistance. The so-called spiritual life is full of these resistances because it is considered to be the effort of one's will.

But it is forgotten that true religious life is not a matter of changing one's pattern of life, not just a change of behaviour. It is fundamentally concerned with motivation. If the motivation is unchanged and a mere behavioural pattern is changed—then it is like changing the vessel but the water in it is still dirty and polluted. This is what Kabir alludes to in



the poem quoted above where he says: "what am I to do, for I conquer anger and lust remains". In fact in such a so-called virtuous life there is an effort to suppress one pattern of behaviour in order to adopt another—so-called better mode of behaviour. But suppression evokes its own problem, which is perhaps worse.

In the question of motivation the good and the bad are alike, with no qualitative difference between the two. To renounce both good and the evil—then what? Once again we are faced with the same problem, the same paradoxical situation. Any cultivation of virtue involves the effort of the self to continue. It looks as if virtue is a congenial ground for the aggrandisement of the same ugly self. Thus, to be virtuous by an effort of the will is to perpetuate the evil under the guise of so-called good. Krishnaji says:

Virtue is not the denial of vice, it is a state of being, and being is not an idea. The man who cultivates virtue is not virtuous .... Self-interest cannot cultivate virtue, it can only perpetuate itself under the mask of virtue, under the cover of virtue there is still the activity of the self.

Virtue is not the opposite of vice. If it were so, then the so-called spiritual life would be a mere play of the opposites. And such play of the opposites is self-defeating. It is only a movement round about the same ugly self. Such an effort is only tantamount to mere window dressing where the same rotten stuff is being displayed. It is not a matter of substituting bad motives for good. A virtuous life is free from all motivation—both good as well as bad. Therefore Kabir says—'Stand still where you are'. Thus, it is a state where all movement of the mind has ceased, for every movement has a motive when it is consciously engineered. But if there is no movement then how can there be progress?

The movement of life can be either the movement of becoming or a movement of being. The movement of becoming is an exquisite movement, gathering more and more to itself. It is very often called the positive movement—but truly it is a movement of self-assertion or of self-acquisition. It is the concept of the mind which is at the root of all movements of becoming. The conscious movement of becoming is towards a pre-conceived end or goal. It is the product of mind's concept. Thus, all conscious becoming is in the field of the known, the known as conceived by the human mind. Any virtuous life based on this is a movement from the known to the modified known. Mind by its effort cannot get out of the field of motivation. It may substitute one motive for

another, or may call it a good and desirable motive. Thus, a so-called virtuous life is a life of modified continuity; there is no perfume of freshness in such a virtue. It is stale and stinking.

But then how is one to be free from all motivation? And without motivation what is the incentive to move? Is not a life without motivation and incentive a stagnant life? The New Testament says—"Look at the Lilies in the field—they toil not nor do they spin" and we are told by the New Testament that even King Solomon in all his glory, was not half as glorious as these Lilies. From where did this glory come? They toiled not nor did they spin. There was no conscious effort to appear grand and glorious—and yet there was a splendour which even King Solomon could not show forth. One might say it is all right to talk about the Lilies in the field, but what about man. It is not realised that the glories of becoming are nowhere near the glories of being. But can such glories be seen in the life of a human being?

The great Shankaracharya said—"The highest state is the natural state". It is not a state built by the efforts of the mind, for every effort by the mind is tinged with motivation. There is a striving after something, trying to become something. The teachings of Zen Buddhism say : You can become only what you are, you cannot become what you are not. To become what one is—this is very strange. Kabir says in one of his songs:

The spiritual experience—*Samadhi*—is a natural experience I do not close my eyes nor do I plug my ears—with open eyes I see His beauty and His splendour, with smile on my face. Whatever I say is His name, whatever I hear is His name, whatever I do is my worship and my adoration. For me my home and the garden are not different—the place where I am engaged in performing my duties is also the place desolate and lonely. Beyond the dualities of pain and pleasure there is Joy. (8)

But how does one come to this experience? Is there any way, any method by which one comes to this state? The joys of being are greater than the pleasure of becoming.

But is there nothing like becoming? In nature we see all the time the seed becoming a plant and the plant becoming a tree. Even at the human level we see the little child becoming a grown up man. How can one deny the process of becoming? This process is at the very heart of evolution? Have we to discard evolution which is perceptible at all levels of manifested life?

We have to note that there is a natural becoming and there is a



conscious becoming. The natural becoming has its roots in the beingness of things whereas the conscious becoming is rooted in the mind and its activities. And mind functions in the ground of concepts. Now a concept has its motivation in ends and goals—these ends and goals have been formulated by the mind itself. The mind has its purpose in reaching those ends. This is the motivation behind all efforts at conscious becoming. The positive factor in such becoming is the fulfilment of the ends projected by the mind. Thus, it is not natural becoming where the thing becomes what it is. The Zen Master said to his pupil, "you can become what you are—if you are not Buddha than you cannot become Buddha".

But the positive beingness can flower only in the soil of the negative. The soil must be completely devoid of weeds and overgrowth if the positive is to take root. What is meant by the soil being made negative? It is where the mind is emptied of all concepts and ideas. All that is of the mind, what the mind has conceived has to be put away—then alone one can come to a real positive experience. The positive and negative are not opposed to each other. There is a relationship between the being and the becoming. They are not unrelated. The negative is the soil whereas the positive is the flower that grows in the soil. Krishnaji's teachings are not negative in nature—they are supremely positive—but he lays stress on the ground being rendered negative. Kabir drawing the simile of weaving, which was most natural to him since he was a weaver, says:

I have woven a sheet with much care and labour. I gave the woven sheet to a man who called himself spiritual. He wore it but immediately soiled it. The really spiritual man wore it and gave it back as clean and unsoiled as it was when it was given to him. (9)

Here the great Seer Kabir speaks of motivation. It is the motivation, whether good or bad, that soils the cloth of life. Where there is motivation there is no true spirituality. The mind of man must be cleansed of all motives even those that are regarded as spiritual and divine. The *Bhagvad Gita* speaks of the nature of the spiritual man and says—"He is one who has put aside both good and evil". But from where does he act? His action arises from the ground of negativity. Krishnaji says:

If the mind is seeking a result, however noble and worthy, if it is concerned with becoming, it ceases to be extensive and infinitely pliable. It must be the unknown to receive the unknowable.



The unknown receiving the unknowable—it is this which is the true nature of virtue, the nature of spiritual life. Are being and becoming related to each other? Yes. It is a relationship of the unknown and the unknowable. The positive which for ever is the unknowable is received by the soil which is negative, for, it is the unknown from where all the known has been emptied. The known completely emptied of all that it has known is the truly negative soil in which the positive virtue is born. The so-called spiritual man soils the garment which he wears because of the conscious and the unconscious motivation with which he is seething. If we are to grasp the meaning of this relationship between the being and the becoming we must explore the ground in which they meet, for the meeting of the being and the becoming is the real secret of spiritual life.

### III

## THE MEASURABLE AND THE IMMEASURABLE

WE STATED IN THE LAST CHAPTER that the secret of spiritual life lies at the meeting point of the being and the becoming. Referring to the teachings of Krishnaji it was mentioned that he speaks of being virtuous but not getting caught in the process of becoming virtuous. The first part of the statement contains the positive aspect of his teachings but the second refers to the negative. How can one be virtuous without striving to become virtuous? Can the being and the becoming ever meet? Do they not cancel each other? If the meaning of spiritual life is to be found at the meeting place of being and becoming then one is for ever lost in the meaninglessness of the pursuit, in which he is engaged.

But then life always speaks in paradoxes. And in paradox lies the meaning of life. If being and becoming do not meet then the latter is devoid of all meaning. Life at all levels has two aspects—the manifest and the unmanifest, or as David Bohm, the scientist, says there is an explicate order and there is an implicate order. This is only the other way of saying that there is the manifest aspect of life and there is the unmanifest. It is the unmanifest that gives meaning to the manifest. The enigma of the explicate order cannot be solved by splitting up the explicate into its constituent parts—but in catching the glimpse of the implicate. Can the implicate be broken up in parts? If not, how is one to know the nature of the implicate order of things?

The great English poet, Edwin Arnold, said in his famous poem—*The Light of Asia*—"measure not with words the immeasurable".

The literature of the world, both in the East and the West, abounds in many paradoxes. Krishnaji presents us with a strange paradox—Be virtuous but do not become virtuous. Now a paradox cannot be solved by the mind. The mind can deal with problems of choice, in its own way, because a choice demands choosing between either this or that. But when

we are presented with a situation of neither this nor that, then all choices fail. And all paradoxes point to a situation of neither this nor that—or they may talk of the co-existence of both. Two contradictory things or situations existing together appear to be the subject-matter of many a paradox. The *Upanishads* speak of life being perishable and imperishable at the same time. The togetherness of the two conflicting things constitutes a situation which cannot be grasped by the mind. If life is both measurable and immeasurable—then what is one to believe? The mind of man is unable to grasp its meaning. But that is exactly the position created by modern science. Life is both continuous and discontinuous, that is what scientists tell us today. Krishnaji says:

Understanding can only come when there is direct perception, not a reasoned conclusion.

Understanding demands direct perception—but the mind of man is incapable of perceiving anything directly. It always sees through dark glass. To the mind, a reasoned conclusion is identical with reality—in fact it is the only reality that it knows. Reason and logic are its instruments of knowledge. Whatever is outside the purview of logic and reason is not worth-knowing so far as mind is concerned. Mind knows only a mathematical reality, not an empirical reality. It does not see the thing as it is, but only a concept of it. It goes by statistical calculation which man seems to have perfected through computers. But as Karl Meninger in his book *The Vital Balance* says:

Life is more than permutation in the DNA molecule as the Fifth Symphony is more than the vibrating air.

But the mind refuses to consider as valid that which escapes the calculations, mathematical and statistical, to which it is wedded.

The question arises: Has mind no validity in the scheme of things? Mind is the product of long evolutionary history. The mind of man is a marvellous organ which has taken nature millions of years to produce. Is that effort of nature redundant? Has the mind to be discarded as superfluous? Both Kabir and Krishnaji have come down heavily on the mind and its limitations. If mind has a validity, then one may ask—what is it?

In the sphere of measurement, mind is excellent. Where one is concerned with mathematical calculations and measurement there is nothing to equal the mind. But life is not just measurement and



calculation. There are areas of life where measurement has no relevance whatsoever. Where measurements and calculations are concerned, mind, if it is trained, can be depended upon without any difficulty. But where measurement has no relevance, the verdict of the mind cannot be relied upon. The great psychologist, C.G. Jung says in his book *The Undiscovered Self*:

The statistical method shows the facts in the light of an ideal average, but does not give us a picture of their empirical reality. While reflecting an indisputable aspect of reality, it can falsify the actual truth in a misleading way. This is particularly true of theories based on statistics. The distinctive fact about real facts, however, is their individuality. Not to put too fine a point on it, one could say that the real picture consists of nothing but exceptions to the rule, and that in consequence absolute reality has predominantly the character of irregularity.

Here one is reminded of the statement that one finds in Jain philosophy where, while speaking about the doctrine of *Syadvada*, it says that—

Reality breaks through all formulations of laws and principles. Then how is one to realise it? It is by looking into that which has escaped all efforts to formulate laws and principles.

Reality is to be found not in what has been caught in law but what has *not* been caught there. Thus reality is not reasoned conclusion. That does not mean that one must indulge in unreason. It is to be found neither in reason nor in unreason. This is once again a paradox. What is it which is beyond reason and unreason? Kabir says in one of his poems:

Where are you searching for me? I am not far from you. Not in temple nor in mosque, not in Kaba nor in Kailas. I am not in ritual and ceremonies nor am I in practices of yoga and austerities. If you know where to search, you will find reality in a moment for it is the very breath of breaths. (10)

Reality is to be found not in the magnificent edifices built by reason and logic but in the open spaces, not covered by mind's edifice. What the mind can find is a statistical average, the product of its mathematical calculations. Do not seek for that reality in the house of the mind, built so laboriously by its instruments of logic and measurement. It is to be found

neither in reason nor in unreason. If reason is the field of an alert and active mind, unreason is the field of a sloppy and dull mind. Both reasons and unreasons belong to the area covered by mind and its operations.

But the mind is not aware of the interval between reason and unreason. It is a void for the mind and the mind regards void as identical with nothingness. There is a fullness of the void which the mind is unable to perceive. Madame H.P. Blavatsky in her *Voice of the Silence* says: 'The right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent'.

It is not in the network of structural understanding that the right perception of things lies. It is outside the logical system which the mind has woven. Physical science, till now accepted this as the only true area of perception. It took no cognizance of anything that was outside this area. But modern physicists are beginning to be aware of this area, to be explored, if reality is to be cognized. But how is one to be aware of this?

We seem to be thinking that intellect alone can reveal to man the mysteries of life and nature. But greater than intellect is intelligence. Krishnaji says: 'Intelligence is much greater than intellect, for it is the integration of reason and love'.

He says at another place "Intelligence is the spontaneous perception" of men and things. But the mind of man is conditioned in many ways. It is conditioned to look at things only in one way—the way of the intellect. We have been discussing about vice and virtue. Now a vice is nothing but a conditioned perception of things and the action arising out of that perception. Virtue is a state of freedom, a state which is liberation from all conditioning, whether good or bad. There is nothing like good conditioning. Our so-called education strives to put the child in the state of good conditioning. And we are told that it demands strenuous effort to be free from the conditioning to which one is constantly exposed. It involves resistance and rejection so that one is free from bad conditioning. It is a process spread over long duration of time. Krishnaji says:

The totality of our conditioning can be broken—not bit by bit, which takes time, but immediately, by directly perceiving the truth of the matter. It is truth that liberates, not time or your intention to be free.

To be free from total conditioning immediately is something which the mind of man is unable to understand. It knows only one process and that is the passage of time. Everything must happen in the duration of time—nothing can happen instantly and immediately. This itself is the



result of mind's conditioning stretching over millions of years. Time seems to be the greatest conditioning factor of the human mind. But perception is immediate and instantaneous—not spread over in the flux of time. Kabir says in one of his songs about which we have referred to earlier—

If you know how to search, you will find reality in an instant. (10)

Sri Aurobindo said a profound truth when he mentioned in his immortal epic *Savitri* "Mind climbs in vain and brings borrowed lights". Whatever the mind finds and discovers is borrowed light, never the real, the intrinsic. Kabir in one of his poems tells us—

The mind is like a trader—it never measures totally. In its measures it gives the impression that it has measured fully but in fact he has deducted his own share. It puts a drop of poison in the cup of nectar. He hides things in its fist—do not trust that which does not open its closed fist. (11)

The mind never perceives—it only talks of reasoned conclusion. Time is indeed the closed fist of the mind and so it takes recourse to time so as to put off seeing things in an instant.

The Hindu philosophers referred to one simile again and again where they spoke of the "rope being mistaken for a snake". This is exactly what the mind does—it mistakes the rope for the snake and creates fright and fear in the heart of the perceiver. And out of this fear arise many psychological complications in the form of physical and mental illnesses.

This real perception is the awareness of the meeting point of the being and the becoming, the measurable and the immeasurable. And true perception is possible only at this meeting point, for it is at this point that the immeasurable touches the measurable for a split second, not to be gauged in the duration of time. It is in the split second that perception comes. Sri Aurobindo said—"The moment sees, the ages toil to express". The moment that sees is the experience of the being and the toiling by the age is the process of becoming. The being—the natural being—is forever the unknown. The human consciousness that has recognised its limitation, calling it the unknown, can alone perceive it. The perception is in the timeless moment and its expression arises in the duration of time. Thus the meeting of the unknown and the unknowable is the meeting of the timeless and the time. The natural being—not the conceptual being, is for ever the immeasurable. It cannot be measured



because it is unknown. It is becoming which belongs to the realm that is measurable.

The meeting point of the being and the becoming, indeed, contains the secret of spiritual life. Krishnaji says: "Thought cannot solve any human problem, for thought itself is the problem".

One may ask—why is thought the problem? Krishnaji elsewhere states—

One may be able to reason very intelligently, very cleverly, but that reasoning has the background of a particular conditioning. To say that the mind can or cannot be free from its conditioning is still a part of its conditioning.

Thought is a reaction, and if so, this reactive tendency emerges out of its response to a challenge. Thus thought does not arise in freedom but out of its response to a happening. And so thought is indeed a problem—in fact the problem giving birth to other problems. Thus mind, the generator of thought can never find solution to the problems of life. H.P. Blavatsky say: 'Mind is the great slayer of the real, the thought producer, he who creates illusion'.

If mind is the creator of illusion, how can it bring the right perception?

The mind has validity while dealing with measurable things. Its relevance lies in the field of quantity. But life cannot be confined in quantitative measurements. There are things which overflow and therefore transcend all measurements. Can the immeasurable ever be known? In the meeting point of the being and natural being comes the vision of the immeasurable. For this all effort at conscious becoming must stop. The question is—When and how? We must explore this most pertinent and intensely practical question.

## IV

### THE EXPERIENCE OF DISCONTINUITY

IT IS VERY SURPRISING but most significant that Krishnaji during his talks, discussions and writings, spreading over sixty years, had not even once referred to experiences of a psychic, super-physical or extra-sensory nature. He was well-versed in human thought in various fields of life. He was fully in touch with advances in the fields of science, philosophy and religion. And yet he did not even once refer to psychic or para-psychological experiences. Not even in passing did he refer to happenings of an extra-sensory nature. Why was this so? There is today a veritable explosion of a super-physical nature in the modern world. And intelligent people, scientifically minded people, are greatly interested in it. And yet why did Krishnaji not refer to this even once during his talks and discussions or writings? This omission needs to be inquired into. Even when speaking about death, and he did this very often, he did not refer to the after-death condition or about re-incarnation and allied subjects.

This is so because this grave omission, seemingly grave, arose out of his philosophy and approach to life. In his talks and writings we often come across three words—continuity, modified continuity and discontinuity. The meaning and implications of these three terms are most essential to the proper understanding of Krishnaji's approach to life. It is obvious that thought can function only in the realms of continuity. One can think about only what one knows—with regard to the unknown, no thinking is ever possible. Thought is ever confined to the circle of continuity—it cannot, by itself, step out of this circle. All thinking, however abstract, is moving round this circle. This is the inherent limitation of thought and thinking. Kabir said in one of his couplets:

What wrong has your head done that you  
remove the hair that grows there again .

and again. Why not shave the mind where  
all distortions arise? (12)

The shaving of the head and the shaving of the mind are very interesting ideas that he places before us. The shaving of the head is regarded by devout men of religion, in the East and the West, as very holy for monks and *sanyasis* invariably do this. But what is meant by shaving the mind? It refers to the mind divested of all processes of thinking. It does not mean merely the mind freed of a particular pattern of thought—but freed of the very process of thinking. Generally it is believed that spiritual life demands a substitution of good thoughts with those that are bad or unholy. But such a change in the pattern of thought does not constitute spiritual life—it may be regarded as so-called religious life. Religion is based, organised religion particularly, on belief or concept. One religion is supposed to differ from other religions by a set of beliefs. Here the emphasis is on the pattern of thought. By shaving the mind, Kabir indicates that the mind must be free from the very thinking process because it is the thinking process that is the repository of all distortions. Krishnaji says—

A consistent thinker is a thoughtless  
person because he conforms to a pattern,  
he repeats phrases and thinks in a groove.

To change the pattern of thought is to change a particular groove and move on to another groove. It is the groove itself that has to be discarded, if the mind is to be freed.

We have stated earlier that Krishnaji uses three words—continuity, modified continuity and discontinuity. He has kept completely away from any discussions of subjects pertaining to the super-physical or the extra-sensory. Even while discussing the problem of death he never deals with the after-death condition about which religions speak, in the East as well as the West. The nomenclature is different but the content is the same. Whether one speaks of the heaven or the *Devachan* or the Astral plane—its nature is the same. It is concerned with modified continuity. In the vast literature concerning death that one finds in the East as well as the West, all that is discussed is the after-death condition—not about the state of death itself. And so death is seen as a condition of modified continuity. It is true that in the hour of death, living, as we usually understand, comes to an end. Physical body ceases to exist—the continuity of the physical body comes to an end. But the consciousness of



man, particularly as represented by the mind, lives. It has suffered no change except that one of its avenues of expression, the body, is not available to it. But even otherwise, during our moments of physical life, we do not live all the time in the body but more in the mind with its memories and imagination, with its dreams and aspirations, with its frustrations and dejections. This is our life when we are physically alive—and these continue when the physical body dies. If so, surely what we call death is not the end of everything—it is an entry into the world of modified continuity. The so-called death is not an end—but living in the realm of another continuity, modified but nevertheless a state of continuity. Krishnaji was not concerned with death as modified continuity. He said:

Death means a renewal, a total mutation in which thought does not function at all because thought is the old. But when there is death there is something totally new.

What is meant by the above statement 'when there is death there is something new'? Does Krishnaji refer to the factor of re-incarnation? No, he does not, for Krishnaji has hardly spoken about re-incarnation except on very few occasions. People have said that he believed in re-incarnation—some others have denied this. Belief or non-belief is something with which Krishnaji is not concerned. He is not interested in this question. On the subject of belief he says:

Belief is an impediment to reality, and that is a very difficult pill to swallow for most of us. We are not seeking reality, we want gratification, and belief gives us gratification, it pacifies us.

Now belief and non-belief are not two different things. Non-belief is a negative form of belief and so both are the two sides of the same coin. Re-incarnation is a belief which one clings to for it gives one the satisfaction of knowing that there is modified continuity even when the continuity of physical life is gone. Kabir says:

The ordinary man remains within his limits, the so-called spiritual man moves in the area which is beyond the limit—but he who discards both—the limits and no-limits, has the intelligence to know the immeasurable. (13)

Like Kabir, Krishnaji spoke about neither belief nor non-belief in our

times. He did not say that re-incarnation exists or that it does not exist. His perception was beyond this. He spoke of renewal, but not much about re-incarnation. Re-incarnation is a form of modified continuity whereas renewal came out of the experience of discontinuity, and discontinuity alone is the experience of death. This renewal is not in the context of physical death. Kabir said in one of his couplets:

This is the House of Love—not of a relative. He who willingly  
offers his Head, first he alone can enter this House. (14)

In the *Kāthopanishad*, one of the major Upanishads, the teacher—the Lord of Death says to the pupil, Nachiketā—

He who does not know death while alive will not know what death  
is after the so-called death of the body.

To know death while alive—it is a strange statement which cannot be understood by intellect. This is exactly what Krishnaji means by the experience of discontinuity and what Kabir means by “offering the head first” and then entering the House of Love. But what does this mean—to know death while alive? The mind of man always lives in the realm of continuity or of modified continuity. It wants to understand the meaning of death in the realm of continuity or modified continuity. That is what the scriptural texts of various religions have spoken about. In traditional Hinduism as well as Buddhism the problem of death has been discussed in terms of after-death condition. In Islam and Christianity, although there is no clear mention of re-incarnation, they also refer to the survival of man after death. This is the train of thought visible in the vast literature of modern spiritualism or in books dealing with super-physical.

Thus, death has been sought to be understood in terms of modified continuity. People have been consoled by detailed descriptions of the after-death condition. But in all these discussions the experience of death is side-tracked. The moment of death is a moment of discontinuity—and not just modified continuity. Thus death is concerned with the experience of discontinuity. But the question arises—discontinuity of what? Is it the discontinuity of the physical body that is indicated? The body dies but then it is not the end of everything. Consciousness of the human being continues. The mind, as an expression of this consciousness, lives on. And it is this living on of the mind which is represented in the form of modified continuity. It is not perceptible to the physical eye, but it is visible to the faculty of extra-sensory perception. It is this which is



being discussed in modern spiritualistic literature where we are told that death is not the end and that there is survival after death. Man survives, but in a different scale of existence—not the physical but extra-physical. Man is told that he need not be afraid of death for he will continue to live after physical death. Survival after death and communication with the dead are subjects discussed in spiritualistic literature, not merely in books dealing with traditional religion. Thus, after death life is a continuation of the physical life. It is modified continuity but nevertheless it is not a state of discontinuity. But then the question arises—discontinuity of what? If consciousness continues to live then what is it that ceases to continue? Both Krishnaji and Kabir have focused our attention on the factor which is outside the sphere of continuity. Kabir speaks of offering the head first before entering the House-of Love. Krishnaji says:

To die to everything that you have learnt is to learn. This dying is not a final act, it is to die from moment to moment . . . . Death is not the end of life. Death is not an event brought about by disease, by senility, by old age or by accident. Death is something that you live everyday with because you are dying everyday to everything that you know.

But if that be the case then why is man afraid of death? To die everyday to what? What is it that one leaves behind? Krishnaji says in his book *Krishnamurti to Himself—His Last Journal*:

Why do human beings die so miserably, so unhappily, with a disease, old age, senility, the body shrunk, ugly? Why can't they die naturally and as beautifully as this leaf? What is wrong with us? In spite of all the doctors, medicines, and hospitals, operations and all the agony of life, and the pleasures too, we do not seem to be able to die with dignity, simplicity, and with a smile.

Yes, the question is—why does not man die with grace and dignity? He knows that death is inevitable and yet he is not happily reconciled to it. Why? It is not the physical body that is reluctant to die but the mind of man. Because the mind has created an entity, the self, the "I", the ego. It is something that is unreal and fictitious. But the mind clings to it. It wants this self to continue. It is this "I" which wants to continue. Its continuity is existence for the mind. It is the discontinuity of this self created and nurtured by the mind, which man hugs to. It demands its continuity, or, if need be, a modified continuity. This is what the



traditional religions have spoken about, and man finds consolation in this theory and this concept. The "I" is indeed a concept and to ask for the continuity of a concept, of an image, seems meaningless. And so what man calls death is no death at all—it is the modified continuity of the self, the ego. What Krishnaji calls death is not the death of the body. This death of the body is an event. He says: "Death is not the end of life, death is not an event". We are afraid of the event of death because of the attachment to the fictitious "I"—and so man wants assurances and experiences of its continuity even though a modified continuity. For this he turns to scriptural books, and to occultists and to those who have extra-sensory perception. If he is told that that "I" continues in the super-physical worlds, he is satisfied, consoled and seeks ways and means to contact it. The body may go, but the "I"—the self must continue. Kabir asks us to offer the head before entering the House of Life.

But if the "I"—the self has no continuity, then what about re-incarnation? This belief in re-incarnation is another field of consolation to man. Does re-incarnation exist? If it does, then is that not a proof of continuity?

Re-incarnation is a fact to be seen in nature everywhere. But the question is—is human re-incarnation in the background of the continuing self—or is it in the background of renewal? Re-incarnation demands a physical death but renewal can happen without physical death. There can be renewal from moment to moment during one's life time. Krishnaji uses the word renewal because of its occurrence in the background of the discontinuity of the "I" or the self. When one experiences renewal, from moment to moment during one's life time, then there comes into being an entirely new background. Re-incarnation presupposes going out of incarnation and taking up another incarnation. But the question is who takes up another incarnation? Is it the same continuing self? Or the new incarnation occurring in a new background—the background of the discontinuity of the old self? For renewal, physical death is not imperative. During the same life time there can happen renewal. In fact there can be renewal from moment to moment even when one is physically alive. Is that the background in which re-incarnation takes place—in the background of constant renewal? The renewal can be constant but never continuous. If constant renewal is the ground in which re-incarnation takes place then we see the most interesting phenomenon of recognition without identification. There may be intimate recognition between persons coming together but with no identification.

Is this possible so that in each meeting there is the recognition of the

old but without the factor of identification of the old with the old? This is a very interesting point which needs further investigation.

But for this we must inquire—who gives sustenance to the “I”—the self? From where does it find its maintenance? Why is there a demand for its continuity? From where does this demand ensue? It is an investigation into these areas of inquiry that will throw a new light on death, and also on re-incarnation and renewal. We will address ourselves to this inquiry into the subject of great import to the problem of death.





## V

### LOOK NOT BEHIND.....

THE CO-FOUNDER OF The Theosophical Society, Madame H.P. Blavatsky in her book, *Voice of the Silence* while giving instructions to the spiritual aspirant, says—'Look not behind, or thou art lost'.

It is a very intriguing advice ever given by a teacher to a pupil, for to look back is very natural for every one. Even when we look forward and attempt to go thither, we always look behind. For, the sheet-anchor of all our movements, for going further is the past. The past is our centre of security. We may deny all authorities of *gurus* and organisations, but we still cannot forsake the authority of our past experiences. The future which is implied in our movement forward may, and, does seem uncertain—but the past is certain. It is the known whereas the future is the unknown. Before moving into the unknown one looks invariably behind to feel secure that he is not moving away very far from the known. And so one is reticent to accept the above advice which says almost bluntly that you will be lost if you look behind. What then is the meaning of this strange advice?

One may say that after all the past is gone, it is not alive—if so what harm is there in looking behind? It is true that the past is gone as an event, it cannot come back and so it cannot exercise any influence on our actions in the present for moving into the future. We have to remember that all past is not dead. There is a past that is still alive. It is dead as an event, but it is still alive as an unfinished experience. As such it is very much alive and therefore exercises a powerful influence on the action performed in the present. But how is the past, which chronologically has gone, capable of influencing the present from where one hopes to move into the future?

It is obviously through memory. This faculty of consciousness is most mysterious and mystifying. Memory has many aspects—the retentive and the associative among the principal ones. The retentive memory is a

factual or chronological memory. It may be called a historical memory. It must function without any impairment, if one is to act and behave sanely. As Krishnaji says:

If I did not know the usage of English or some other language, I would not be able to speak. Communication on the verbal level is necessary in order to understand each other, but it is *what* is said, *how* it is said, from *where* it is said that is important.

There are two factors in the functioning of the mind that need to be considered—one is the recognising activity and the other is the identifying activity. The mind must recognise as otherwise it cannot act intelligently. This recognising activity is possible only by memory. It is due to the memory of facts being a part of retentive memory. One cannot learn a language or communicate with others without this factor of recognition. It is the basis of all healthy social intercourse. Basis of this retentive memory is discernible among animals too, particularly the domesticated animals. But, as Krishnaji says, in the above passage, that all communications through the medium of language derive their importance from—how it is said and from where it is said, apart from the actual words used. It is not merely the actual words used but how and when and why that lie at the root of our so-called social life. It is here that the element of identification comes in. We do not merely recognise things and persons but we identify them. In identification enters the personal factor. While recognition is fundamentally based on objective perceptions, it is in identification that the subjective factor comes into the picture. And by and large our perceptions of the outer world are subjective in nature. This is what physicists speak about when they say “in every act of observation, the observer is involved”. Obviously it is the entry of the subjective factor which changes recognition into an act of identification. To identify something is to locate it in one’s memory, in associative memory not merely the retentive or chronological memory. That is why it is said that it is not the eye that sees but the mind. And what the mind sees is regarded as the real. Thus reality instead of being objective becomes fundamentally subjective. It is this which Krishnaji discusses in his book *Truth and Reality*. According to him Reality is not Truth—in fact reality is what a person perceives from his point of view, his angle of view. That is how a rope is mistaken as a snake—and such is then the nature of this reality perceived by the mind, that one becomes afraid of the non-existent snake—the snake that exists only in one’s mind. This perception comes from the process of identification. A person



does not see what it is but what he thinks it is.

It is true that our memory is sometimes purely retentive. It is so when subjective or psychological factors are not involved. Otherwise our memory of past events is surcharged with elements of identifications. It is through these identifications that past events remain alive and thus influence the present perceptions. These identifications give birth to imagination, very often appearing as fancy. There is no doubt that identifications and imaginations do not allow us to see what is. We jump from the past to the future side-tracking the present. We are by and large motivated by the factors of psychological or subjective or associative memory. To this Patanjali in his *Yoga Sūtras* gives the description of *Asmita* or false identification, one of the major hurdles along the pathway of Yoga. This false identification begets the dual factors of attachment and repulsion, and these in turn create a sense of continuity. Life essentially is discontinuous as they display quantic jumps as modern science reveals to us. But these are perceived by the mind as one continuous process. And so continuity is an illusion created by the mind. On that which is essentially discontinuous, the mind projects a veil of continuity and so one sees for ever through this veil of continuity.

Due to this projection of the veil he sees shadows or images. Our relationship with life is a relationship of image to image. This shadow-play is beginning to be recognised in modern science. It forms part of philosophy both in the East as well as the West. The man of Plato saw shadows and regarded them as reality. Modern science also admits that it does not know what reality is—it regards shadows it perceives as identical with reality. The mind projects images and demands their continuity. When the continuity is not maintained then it is filled with sorrow and suffering, calling this lack of continuity as death. That by which the so-called continuity is maintained he calls pleasant—and that which breaks up this continuity or disturbs it is regarded as unpleasant. This veiling process of the mind is so over-powering that man does not know himself—he identifies the image of the self as self itself.

In the last chapter we raised the question—who maintains this "I", the self, which is the root cause of all troubles? The super-imposition of identification which otherwise is only a phenomenon of recognition is done by the mind. The mind is thus the creator of the "I" or the self. It is the endless continuity of the self which is the demand of man. Not knowing the real and regarding the image, the shadow as a veritable reality, is the deeper problem with which Eastern philosophy has been essentially concerned. In the *Ashtavakra Gita*, one of the scriptural texts in Hinduism, the sage Ashtavakra giving instruction to King Janaka who



wanted to know about the way of liberation says:

If you can separate yourself from your image and be completely relaxed then here and now, at this moment, you will be happy, at peace and liberated.

Here and now, instantaneously liberation can be found if only one were to be free from the image or the embodiment of one's mental concepts. We live in a world of image created by the human mind. We do not know the thing or the person or the event in itself but only by its concept or image formed in the mind. In fact, we do not know ourselves, we have an image of ourselves. And so complete is our identification with the image that we are not even aware of any existence outside the image. Kabir says in one of his poems:

You have forgotten yourself. Just as looking at its own image the dog barks at it regarding it as some other, just as the lion looking at its image in the well jumps into the well, fiercely attacking it, just as an elephant looking at its image in the polished stone rubs itself to death, just as the monkey moves from house to house unable to forget the taste of the food, Kabir says to human beings who has bound you that you are seeking your freedom?

Both the feeling of being caught and seeking liberation from one's so-called bondage are illusions, concepts of the mind. Man is caught as a prisoner by his own image. Both liberation and bondage are an illusion. It is the identification with one's image—that indeed is the problem of man. In the *Ashtavakra Gita*, the sage asks the pupil, King Janaka: What is it that binds you from which you frantically seek your liberation? And he himself replies to the question saying: 'Your bondage lies here in that you have created another observer'.

Who is this other observer whose verdict and judgment man accepts unquestionably? It is the mind that is installed as another observer—and it is its conclusions that are regarded by man as sacrosanct. We do not see what is—we accept the embodiment of our concepts, the images as identical with reality. And it is this memory of identification which is the begetter of the "I" and the self. The self or the "I" is the creation of the mind which for ever seeks its continuity. Its continuity is regarded as life and its discontinuity as death. For us life as well as death are the concepts of the mind, the images projected by the mind of man. And so H.P. Blavatsky said: 'Give up life if thou wouldst live'.

Krishnaji says in one of his talks given in Madras in 1967:

You cannot look at your wife or your husband or your political leader or your religious leader without the ideology, the image, that you have created of that person, and the person who is looking at you has an ideology about you, his image about you, and therefore the relationship between the two is a relationship of two images.

Our relationship with the world, with things and persons and ideas, is only an image to image relationship. The mind creates the image and sustains it through the workings of the associative memory. That is why H.P. Blavatsky says—'Look not behind or thou art lost'. We shall be caught in the walter and whirlpool of memory. It will carry us away into what it regards as pleasant and desirable. The fictitious self or the "I" is created by the mind and sustained by the associative memory. But why associative memory and not the retentive memory? In retentive memory events and experiences end; it is in the associative memory that they are sought to be continued. The self or the "I" is maintained and sustained in the field of associative memory.

But then why and how does the associative memory come into existence? Why does not memory live and exhaust itself at the retentive level? Why is it transformed into its associative counter-part? This happens when there is no synchronisation between the ending of the event and the ending of the experience with regard to that event. It is the non-synchronisation of the two which is the creator of associative or psychological memory. Where the two synchronise there does not arise the craving for continuity. We all know that an event comes and goes—it does not continue, it flows away in the stream of life. Life does not stop for the completion of the experience. There is a flux of life into which everything moves. The Buddha spoke about the momentariness of life. Life exists from moment to moment. The moment is an interval in the flow of time—and it is in that interval, and there alone, where life exists. The Hindu philosophers and psychologists too spoke about the momentariness of life.

But our perceptive instrument is the mind, and mind sees everything in succession. It is this successive consciousness that seeks continuity where it does not exist. The successive happenings are linked with the thread of continuity by the mind. But why does mind need this linkage? This linkage is sought to be established by the flow of time. This flow is not identical with the flow of life. The mind of man super-imposes the flow of the mind on the flow of life. It is this super-imposed flow which is the



field of time in which the mind of man ever lives, moves and has its being. But why does man need this super-imposition of a movement different from the movement of life itself? This is because of the non-synchronisation of the event and the experience. There is a demand for the continuity of time so as to enable one to complete an experience. This non-synchronisation between the event and the experience is the creator of psychological or personal time. The mind demands the completion of experience in the field of continuing time. And the mind which perceives things and events successively is always in need of the continuity of time. A successive perception is a fragmented perception. Life is sought to be experienced bit by bit—not all at once. But life cannot be fragmented, and that is why in things that are living, mind's experiences are always incomplete. It demands a completion of experience in the duration of time. It is in this demand that psychological or personal memory is born. But life does not exist in the continuity of time. Life is complete from moment to moment. And so man looks behind and pines for what is not. Mind is unable to see what is. For life is the whole and has to be experienced as a whole—not in fragments. That is why looking back into the past is intensely frustrating. Here one moves from the incomplete to the incomplete. It is here that man is lost, for the next moment is new, not the completion of the old. Life is found in moments of interval between one manifestation and the other. The mind that seeks a link between one continuity and the other is for ever doomed to disappointment. Life can be experienced only in a moment—the second moment is new, not a continuation of the old. The mind cannot know the completion of experience which is only in a moment. Kabir says in one of his couplets:

There is a mirror within, but in  
 it one's face cannot be seen. One's  
 face can be seen only when the mind  
 is free from the conflict of dualities. (16)

But how is mind to be free from this conflict of dualities, the dualities of the past and the future. The mind which is the creator of time, can it be free from the shackles of time? But for this we must examine mind's conflict of dualities in which it is caught and is lost. Rightly does Madame Blavatsky say—'Look not behind or thou art lost'. Can man be freed from this tantalizing movement of time?



## VI

### THE OBSTINATE DUALITY

ALL MANIFESTATION or the explicate order implies the existence of duality. Without the presence of duality no manifestation is possible. One may call this duality by spirit and matter, or life and form or *purusha* and *prakriti* as the Hindu philosophers called it. But the question is—Is there a conflict between the two? If there is a conflict then manifestation is not possible at all. We discussed earlier about the being and the becoming. If becoming is natural then it is in perfect harmony with the being. In fact, natural becoming is only an expression of the being. It is when the becoming is conceptual that it is out of harmony with the state of being. Manifestation is a natural process, one that is inevitable. Spirit and matter have a natural relationship, so has Life and form. Life must need a form to express itself. Duality is the very nature of expression or manifestation. The non-dual state is the state of the unmanifest. The moment the unmanifest has entered the realm of manifestation, however subtle it may be, duality comes into existence.

If duality is the natural order of things, then why do we bring in the question of conflict? If experience and expression are co-existent and co-related then to think of one without the other is to talk of something which is incomplete. They are not mutually exclusive—in fact they together give one a full picture of the state of existence. But as we have stated this mutual relationship exists where we are dealing with the state of natural becoming and not conceptual becoming. In a state of conceptual becoming, the process of becoming is not natural but forced and laboured. We have discussed this earlier while talking about being virtuous and becoming virtuous. When conscious or unconscious motivation enters the process of becoming then the latter is rendered corrupt and impure. In the *Narada Bhakti Sutra*—the aphorisms dealing with devotion—the author says—

The love or devotion of the Gopis, the cowherd maidens, is pure and uncontaminated—but even here if the cowherd maidens forget the glory and the greatness of Sri Krishna, it is not a blemish—in fact if they do not forget then their relationship is corrupt and immoral.

This seems so completely different from our usual notions of relationship. Any conscious relationship is with a motive, good or bad. He who consciously strives to become virtuous is not virtuous at all. To become humble by a conscious or deliberate effort is to negate humility. One may carve out a pattern of humble behaviour—but surely there is no perfume in that humility. It is arrogance masquerading as humility. It is too ugly beyond words. In the well-known book of Theosophical Mysticism—*The Light on the Path*—the author says:

...vices of the ordinary man pass through a subtle transformation and reappear with changed aspect in the heart of the disciple. The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to things which concern his larger span of life.

In the conscious process of becoming virtuous or spiritual, it is the self, the ego that is at the centre of the so-called higher life. In conscious process of becoming there is no perfume or fragrance of spiritual life. Here the relationship between being and becoming is not natural but forced. That is why in such becoming there is frustration. Here there is the phenomenon of duality, not of polarity. While dualities are mutually exclusive, polarities are not—they are mutually inclusive. They are complementary showing nowhere any sign of conflict whatsoever. Being and becoming can be related either in terms of dualities or in terms of polarities. The two poles of the earth are not in conflict with each other—if that were so the planet Earth would lose its balance and be destroyed in space. Although operating differently, together they keep the planet in a state of harmony. The secret of life consists in knowing how to transform dualities into polarities. In fact, in such transformation lies the secret of true spiritual life.

We have titled this chapter as *Obstinate Duality*. Obviously it implies that there are certain dualities that do not lend themselves to the process of transformation about which we have just spoken. They refuse to be transformed into polarities. And so they are ever in conflict and contradiction. What are these obstinate dualities, whether one or many?



It is the duality of the thinker and the thought. But before we go into the question of the duality of the thinker and the thought, let us realise that no duality can ever be resolved by the mind. The human mind may attempt to resolve it—but all such attempts are self-defeating for mind itself is the creator of dualities. Krishnaji says:

Within the pattern of duality there is no lasting answer. Each opposite has an element of its own opposite, and so there can never be a permanent answer within the conflict of the opposites. There is a permanent, unique answer only outside of the pattern.

But are there dualities which are soft and dualities which are hard and obstinate? No, there are no such classifications. If there are no soft dualities and no such classifications then why have we chosen to write about obstinate dualities? An obstinate duality, obviously, belongs to the category of being hard and difficult. Surely if a duality is non-existent but is regarded as existing—such duality must be regarded as hard. One can deal with something that exists—but how can one tackle that which is non-existent—and yet is almost universally regarded as existent? This is the duality of the thinker and the thought. It is taken for granted by most people that they belong to the realm of duality—and by no seeming effort can this duality be resolved. Krishnaji says:

Are not the thinker and his thought an inseparable phenomenon? Why do we separate the thought from the thinker? Is it not one of the cunning tricks of the mind so that the thinker can change the garb according to circumstances, yet remain the same? Outwardly there is an appearance of change but inwardly the thinker continues to be as he is. The craving for continuity, for permanency, creates this division between the thinker and his thought.... Only when the thinker ceases is there reality.

Is thinker different from thought? It is the continuity of thought which is the thinker. The division between the two is a device for continuity. The thinker is indeed the continuity of thought. The thinker is indeed the "I", the self, the ego. It hides behind the facade of thought so that it is regarded as holy and not a part of the sordid nature of thought. Krishnaji says:

As long as there is the thinker and the thought there must be duality.  
As long as there is a seeker who is seeking there must be duality. As

long as there is the experiencer and the thing to be experienced, there must be duality. So duality exists when there is the observer and the observed. There is as long there is a centre, the censor, the observer, the thinker, the seeker, the experiencer as the centre there must be the opposites.

A state of search without seeking—that indeed is the true spiritual state. To seek is to know the direction in which reality exists. In seeking, there is movement from the known to the known—or at best modified known which can be easily recognised by the mind. The mind may give another name to what it finds—but the name is still within the cognizance of the mind. Very often it is said—Seek and you will find. But find what? Find only that which one has known or that which one has projected. We live in the world of name and form. But reality is nameless and formless—and yet it is capable of taking myriads of forms and names, with a thousand names it is still the nameless. But man is not seeking the nameless, for the nameless cannot be sought after—it is known only when it comes. But it is the constant effort of the mind to put what one is searching for in the form that can be recognised. That is why the Christian mystics always said—“God created man in His image, but man thought he was wiser and he created God in his image”. The God that we worship is the creation of the human mind. We create God and seek his blessings—and very often we say that God has been pleased to grant our boon. God is none other than the image of the mind, and the boon too is nothing but the fulfilment of mind’s desire. That which is nameless cannot be found in the thousand names which the mind has coined. Krishnaji says:

Neither the believer nor the non-believer will find God because reality is the unknown, and your belief or non-belief in the unknown is merely a self-projection and therefore unreal.

The mind merely deals with names and words. Because it coins a new name it thinks it knows. The mind of man ever plays about with names and words—and when and if, need arises it is prepared to start the usage of new names and words. But the word is not the thing—the word God is not God. Upanishads said “Reality is that from where both the speech and the mind return, not having found the real”. Mind’s coinage is only of words and names—the coinage which does not serve as legal tender in the affairs of life. Sri Aurobindo says in his poem “Savitri”:



Truth is wider, greater than her form  
 A thousand ikons they have made of her  
 And find her in the idols they adore  
 But she remains herself and infinite.

In the *Purushsukta*, reality is described as pervading all and yet standing ten fingers above. Pervading and yet standing above—such is the paradoxical statement found in the Hindu scriptural text. No name and no word can fully contain the nature of truth or reality. The word is not the thing, the word God is not God. Kabir in one of his immortal poems says in his characteristic manner:

The learned men—the scholars, do not tell the truth. Being experts in words and names they seem to convey that the word is the thing. The uttering of the name of God does not enable one to swim over the ocean of life, just as speaking the word sugar does not sweeten the mouth, just as uttering the name fire does not produce burns on the body, uttering the word water does not quench one's thirst, speaking the word food does not fill one's stomach—if that were not so, then the uttering the name and the word would enable one to reach salvation. (17)

The word is only a symbol not reality itself. One is engaged in substituting names and words—and people think that by such substitution, the truth or the reality can be found. This feeling persists because of the existence of the obstinate duality of the thinker and the thought. The thinker by changing the pattern of thought gives the impression that it knows. It is the changing of thoughts which is implied in the substitution of names and words. The words and names are the manifestation of thought. Thought must need express itself. It is the expression which signifies the existence of thought. Change the thought and expression has to change also. One may utter a thousand different names of God, as a devout man of religion does, but such utterance does not bring one even an inch nearer to the experience of God. The thinker is only the clever device of thought for maintaining its continuity. The thinker and the thought are a joint phenomenon—no, not even a joint phenomenon, but the same thing engineered by the mind for safeguarding its own continuity.

The same thing is true in the subtler aspect of this obstinate duality—and that is the so-called duality of the controller and the controlled. Are they different? The "I" arrogates to itself the role of the controller. We

most often say "I will control my anger, or my jealousy"—but who is this "I"? Is it different from anger or jealousy? We most often divide the mind into the higher and the lower—and the higher takes up the responsibility to control the lower. The higher and the lower are just words—the different names given so as to preserve one's nefarious continuity. The mind divides itself into the higher and the lower, for this is the device that enables it to maintain its continuity. The words used in Hinduism and Buddhism are—*kama-manas* and the *buddhi-manas*. This is only the same mind split into two, calling one non-spiritual and the other spiritual. But does this nomenclature, the introduction of new words and names, change the fact of the mundaneness of life. The higher and the lower are the expressions of the same mundane mind. The vessel is changed but the water inside is as dirty as ever.

That is why Krishnaji brings in a new question in the field of spiritual discipline. He puts the question: Are the controller and the controlled different? If they are not, then how can the so-called controller ever be in a position to control what it regards as required to be controlled? And yet in all traditional spiritual disciplines whether in the East or the West the same duality of the controller and the controlled, the thinker and the thought persists.

This false duality is at the root of unending and frustrating conflict in all religious and moral disciplines. Keeping the thinker intact, we hope to resolve the conflict. But the maintenance of this duality of the thinker and the thought is at the root of frustrating struggle and conflict which is evident in all religious and moral endeavour. One is apt to say with Duryodhan in the *Mahābhārata*—

I know what is good but I cannot pursue it,  
I know what is evil but I cannot refrain from it.

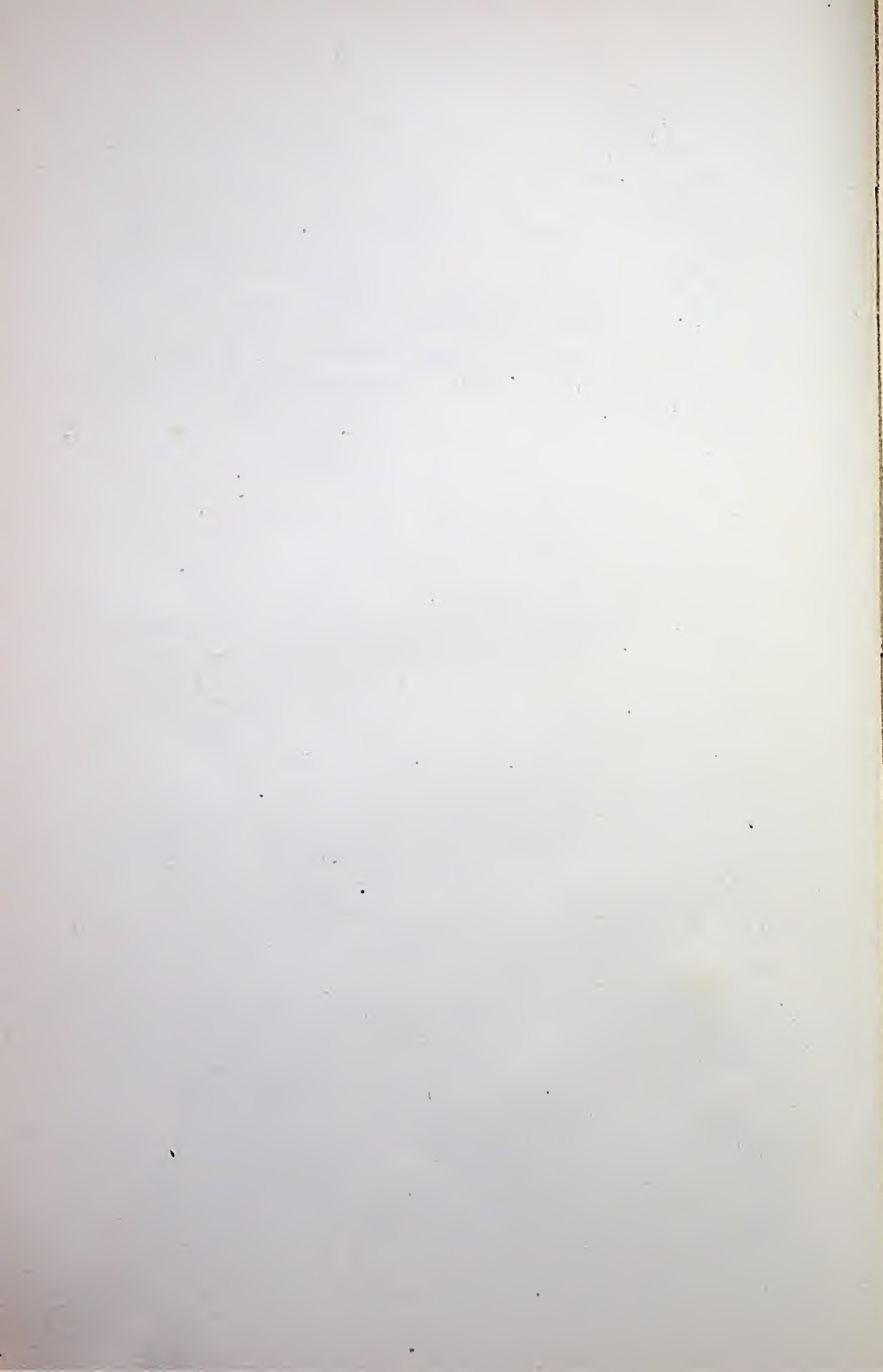
Is a struggle between the good and the evil necessary? We must remember that good and evil are the words coined by the mind. The ceaseless struggle between the two is the guarantee for mind's field of continuity. Krishnaji says:

A mind that is in conflict is a destructive mind, a wasteful mind, and those in conflict can never understand, but conflict is not stilled by any sanctions, beliefs, or discipline, because the conflict itself has to be understood.

But conflict indicates choice—has not man to choose? It is true that in



life one is faced with choices again and again, and without choosing one and discarding the other, man can never move in life. The question is not whether there is choice or no choice—but the pertinent question is—who chooses? Is the entity that chooses different from the conflict involved in choice? If the entity is a part of the conflict, then how to remove that entity? If the “I” is the problem, how is this “I” to be removed? Can the self remove the self, can the “I” abrogate the “I”? If not, what is one to do? To reign oneself to this eternal conflict? Is there a way out from this unresolvable situation? If so what is it? Let us turn to this all important question facing the man of spiritual intention. Is there a way out—if yes, what is it?





## VII

### THE CHOICELESS AWARENESS

WE DISCUSSED IN THE last chapter the question of dualities and polarities. When there is a polarity between two constituents then the question of conflict or contradiction does not arise. The polarised units are complementary to each other—and so there can be no conflict between the two.

Dualities represent contradictions—they cannot exist together because they cancel each other. Their co-existence is a negation of existence. But the contraries can exist together without any conflict—they can coexist in perfect harmony. When contradictions are given a larger perspective, by putting in a wider perceptive area, then they indeed become contraries. For example, light and shade cannot exist together in a small area, for they contradict each other and therefore their co-existence is impossible. But when light and shade are put in a larger perspective then they not only exist together but they shine with great excellence. This is what we see in a landscape where light and shade not only are seen together but their co-existence adds to the beauty of the landscape. Here the erstwhile contradictions have been transformed into contraries. Paul 'Roubiczec, in his remarkable book *Thinking in Opposite* says:

We are forced to think with the help of opposites. The point where the application of opposites becomes impossible or superfluous shows exactly where our thinking is forced to stop.

Our thinking indeed is possible only in the realm of the opposites. In fact the mind creates opposites in order to maintain the continuity of thought. This is what is called dialectical thinking. Mind needs the opposites for its functioning. The sharper the mind the clearer are the formulations of opposites. And so human thinking flourishes only when

opposites are found or are created. Thus contradictions are the soil in which thought finds nourishment. To maintain the opposites is involved in mind's struggle for survival. Our logical thinking is based on the existence of opposites. It abhors contraries for it is a soil where thought cannot survive.

It is here that mind gets involved in the problem of choice. It enjoys this involvement, for, the need for choice gives it a fresh lease of life. The author of the book referred to above rightly says that thinking is possible only in opposites. Opposites have to be created, if they do not already exist, for then alone the mind can have the endless play of the opposites. It is completely lost without the game of choice. Krishnaji says:

There is a choice when you choose a coat or a dress, But is there any other choice at all? Is there a choice when you see something very clearly? ... Choice exists only when there is confusion. When the mind is not confused, there is no choice. There is a direct perception.

Choice obviously implies a state of confusion. And a choice made out of confusion is a confused choice. And so the game of choosing is a never-ending game. It is a process involving "more or less"—a quantitative process. There is never a state of contentment in choice—we do not mean smug satisfaction, but one that brings inner fulfilment. There is the clamour for choice because there is no direct perception. And so one goes to person after person, so-called teacher after teacher, asking as to what must be chosen and what not. Thus choice creates authority, outer or inner.

But then the question arises—if there is no choice then what is the basis of action? Life implies relationship and therefore action. It does not matter whether action is physical, or emotional or mental. Life does not exist in isolation. In fact nothing exists in isolation. Prof. Eddington said pithily: 'The electron vibrates and the whole universe shakes.'

The vibration of the electron is not a lone process—it is related to the whole universe. Everything is related to every thing else. Relationship is the very law of life. And relationship involves movement. This movement naturally entails action. If so—does not action involve choice? Can there be action without choice? After all in a given situation there are likely to be a number of options. One cannot ignore these options. One has to make choice. Thus choice is inevitable if one is to live and act.

But surely in the matter of choice, if it is to be the right one, there is an



imperative need to know all the options, to see all the alternatives. Without knowing all the options and alternatives to choose something and to reject something else is to indulge in an action that is false. Modern science tells us—"you cannot know anything unless you know everything". But how can one know everything—all options and alternatives to any given situation. By situations we mean the psychological situations—not the material or the technological. In the latter case, one can assume that one is capable or can be capable of being cognizant of all alternatives and options—but such is not the case with regard to psychological situations. And we are required to act in the context of psychological situations. Without knowing all, how can we be aware of all options and alternatives pertaining to that situation? And so with regard to psychological situations, to act without having all the facts before us, without knowing all the options or alternatives, is to indulge in an action that is based on confusion. It is acting darkly and therefore not rightly. But the question is—In life can all facts ever be known? Can one see all options and alternatives? If not, then the action done will always have to be approximate, never absolutely right. If our actions with reference to psychological situations do not hit the mark it is because they are based on the principle of approximation. And any choice that is based on approximation invariably proves beside the mark. And so such action fails to lead to right relationship. What then is one to do? Kabir says in one of his couplets:

A person whose eyes are heavy with sleep, does he bother about the pillows and mattresses? No, he does not—He sleeps. (18)

He says in another couplet:

What I am saying is not what has been read or heard, it is a matter of direct perception. When the bride and the bridegroom have met each other face to face, then those belonging to the marriage procession are rendered completely lusterless. (19)

Choice is born out of confusion, perception implies clarity of vision—a perception that is direct not conceptual, an unveiled perception, free from all the veiling done by the mind. Because of this veiling by the mind there is no clear perception—it is conceptualisation by the mind and this is done with the conditioning projected by associative memory. What the mind brings through memory has no intrinsic value—it is tinged with mind's motivation for its own continuity and security. Sri Aurobindo



speaks about it in his poem *Savitri* in a very graphic manner. He says:

All that is taken for reality's shining coin,  
Proved fact, fixed inferences deduction clear,  
Firm theory, assured significance,  
Appeared as frauds upon Time's credit bank  
Or assets valueless in Truth's treasury.

And so mind, not able to come to right perception, has to depend upon its concepts and ideals. Mind's choices are unreliable, and so actions based on such choices have no validity. They are at best inferences or speculations about reality—but not reality itself. And all speculations by the mind are vitiated by the conditioning factors of associative memory which in turn functions on the basis of likes and dislikes. And so choice based on such ground work is obviously undependable.

But the question arises—if mind projects good and bad, then is there nothing good or bad, or right or wrong *per se*—true and false by itself? Does not beauty exist by itself without the intervention of the mind? If so, then is not action based on such a choice dependable? Is such action not right? Further—how does one know right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly *per se*? If one knows it then surely choice has a validity but then it is a choice which is no choice at all—for here one does not choose one and reject the other. There is no factor of acceptance and rejection. It is a state of choicelessness about which Krishnaji speaks again and again. A choice in the ground of choicelessness is a contradiction in terms. A choice implies the existence of two where there is the acceptance of one and the rejection of the other. In a state of choicelessness there is nothing else—there is only the one which one perceives. But is there not something which is good or right by itself, not arrived at by comparison or speculation? If so, what is it and how does one come to it? It does not involve conflict since here good is accepted when seen without the rejection of the false? In life, in nature, there are things which are right and true by themselves, not by comparison. There is beauty *per se* without the rejection of the ugly. Truth or beauty has to be discovered, it cannot be explained. There is nothing else that can explain it. Truth found as a result of explanation or definition is no truth at all. Krishnaji says:

Truth cannot be explained or described. It is. I say there is a loveliness which cannot be put in words; if it were it would be destroyed—it would then be no longer truth.

Truth has to be perceived—it has to be discovered. Not seen as opposite to the false. Right seen not as against the wrong. Beauty is not the opposite of ugliness, truth not as opposed to the false. Mind only sees things as opposed, as contrasted with the other. All its judgments about right and wrong, true and false are based on comparisons or contrasts. Beauty as opposed to ugliness is no beauty at all. Truth as opposed to the false is no truth at all. Knowing by comparison and contrast is the way of the mind—it is based on choice—on the principle of acceptance and rejection. Beauty, love, truth have no opposites. But then how does one come to the perception of the right and the truth if comparisons have no validity? Kabir says in one of his well-known songs:

Remove the veil and you will see here and now the face of your beloved. The beloved is near you and so do not indulge in harsh speech. Do not take false pride in your youth or in your wealth. In the Home of Void light your candle and do not move. Your beloved is inside. There is the joyous singing of songs so says Kabir. (20)

The removal of the veil is a negative act—but meeting the beloved face to face is a positive experience. The negative is the ground in which alone the positive experience comes. Truth can be known in the ground of void or negation. Where there is direct perception there is no place for choice. It is the truth which compels. It is then not the mind that acts but the truth itself. It is true that action takes place through the mind—but mind is not the actor. Mind is only an instrument, the *Nimitta*, the outer cause as the *Bhagavad Gita* describes. But from where does truth arrive? It must traverse long distances to reach the place of action. Krishnaji says:

The truth is not in the distance, truth is near, truth is under every leaf, in every smile, in every tear, in the words, in the feelings, the thoughts that one has. But it is so covered up that we have to uncover it and see. To uncover is to discover what is false, and the moment you know what is false, and when that drops away, the truth is there.

It is in the dropping away of the false that truth is discovered. It is just as Kabir says—'Remove the veil, and you will see the face of the beloved.' The positive is seen in the ground of the negative. The *Upanishad* says:

The face of truth is covered over by the golden veil. Please remove



the veil so that the face of the right and the truth can be seen.

Has one to see the false and then make an effort to discover the truth? These are not two efforts—in the single effort of seeing the false, the face of truth is discovered. But can the mind see the false? Will it not explain it away as truth itself? How can the mind see the false as false? And once again is truth the opposite of false? If so, then are we not once again in the same game of choice? How to see the false as false, not as opposed to truth? How does the mind call it false? Has it not indulged in giving it a name? And all naming is done, as we have seen, due to the conditioning factor of associative memory. Does the mind call it false—or does it see it as false? If so, do true and false exist *per se*? It has to be remembered that true and false exist as opposites contradicting each other. But evidently they also exist by themselves and are not always the products of the mind. When they do exist by themselves are they not projections of the mind and memory?

The false is not seen as false by comparison because if this is done then we are caught in the web of choice with all the consequences of getting involved in choice.

But can life be lived without choice? Is not choice essential for meaningful living? Can action ever be possible without accepting and rejecting something else? Has the phrase used by Krishnaji so often—'Choiceless Awareness'—practical bearing? We are told that in seeing the false as false there is the discovery of the truth—and then it is truth that acts, and not the mind of man.

If the false is seen as false then by that token—why cannot truth be seen as truth? Why is it necessary to see first the false as false and then come to the discovery of truth? It is not seeing false as false, but seeing what it is. It is a question of perceiving what it is. Now life is whole—it cannot be fragmented. It manifests itself in parts—but life, experiencing life, is the experience of the whole. But before one is to experience the whole, one sees the parts. Seeing the parts, when one notices that they are not in harmony but are, as it were, pulling in different and opposite directions, then one is entitled to conclude that a part or the parts seem to be acting in a false manner. One sees the falsity of the part or the parts. This is indeed what is meant by seeing the false. The action of the parts seems to be behaving at the behest of the mind and its conditioning factors. Beauty, truth, goodness are the expressions of the whole where the parts are in a state of harmony—not at loggerheads with each other. To see these activities of the part or the parts is the perception of the

false. But is not the rejection of the part or the parts once again the act of choice? It is just seeing what it is—and that very perception puts away what is not valid. It is not an act of discarding—but the act of dropping away. The false is not discarded but it drops away. In the very perception of the part or the parts acting in a disharmonious way that induces the consciousness to experience the dropping away of the false and the disharmonious. When the parts are not acting in union then the parts drop away. But why do they drop away?

In the accumulating consciousness such dropping away does not take place. Here the mind is engaged in the act of accumulating experiences. When this act of accumulation ceases then alone is created a void in the field of consciousness. This is to which Kabir refers when he talks of lighting a lamp in the void of nothingness. When the entire process of accumulation ceases then is created the void. The perception is in the void of consciousness—it is the void that is aware of the pure beauty, the pure truth or the pure goodness—not beauty, truth and goodness as opposed to ugliness, untruth or non-goodness. But how does the void come, the void of consciousness? Who creates this void? Kabir says:

People have gone upto the void. Nobody has entered the realm of void. He who has, does not speak about it. He only smiles a significant smile. (21)

One is entirely speechless when one returns from the experience of void. What shall one speak about? One can speak about something but nothing is beyond words and names—beyond all processes of verbalization. In void there can be no choice... the awareness of the void is indeed choiceless awareness. There is no speech nor is there a speaker.

But question still remains—How does one come to the experience of the void? Is there the entity who comes to this experience? It is direct perception where there is neither the perceiver nor the perceived. This is indeed the state of choiceless awareness. Why has consciousness come to this state of choicelessness? Is it because it does not see the choices? Or is it incapable of choosing? Mr. C. Jinarajadasa, a former International President of the Theosophical Society, expressed this state beautifully when he said: 'The thinking faculty tense and yet not thinking'.

The mind is capable of thinking, of choosing but does not think nor does it choose. The mind is tremendously active—and yet ceases to act. Why? Because it has seen its own limits. It has come to the awareness that it has reached the limits of thought and action. The mind that sees its



limits, ceases to move. It is silent—not made silent, but it is silent where no choice is possible. The mind cannot be brought to choiceless awareness—it comes of its own accord. But how does it come—and why does it not normally come? Why is the silence of mind such a great problem?

## VIII

### THE FLAME WITHOUT SMOKE

IN THE LAST and the eighteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* there is an interesting discussion on *sanyasa* and *tyaga*, on renunciation and relinquishment. Arjuna, the disciple wants to know the distinction between the two. In fact the knowledge of this distinction between the two is called in the *Bhagavad Gita* the deeper secret. The Gita talks about the secret that is deep, that is deeper and that which is deepest. The distinction between renunciation and relinquishment is called here the deeper secret. And the teacher, Sri Krishna, gives instruction about the deeper secret to his pupil, Arjuna. Now renunciation is always with a motive, the so-called good or the so-called bad. Renunciation is done by the conscious effort of the individual. And every conscious effort has a motive as we have discussed in the earlier chapters. If it is a flame—it is a flame with smoke—not without smoke. We are using the word “smoke” not in the literal sense but in the sense that is figurative. This sometimes, most of the times, is so heavy that one is blinded and so is unable to see what it is. This smoke may be due to knowledge that is dry or due to rituals and ceremonies associated with it—in any case the smoke is generated by the self, the ego, the “I” which remains hidden behind the cloud of smoke. The act of *sanyasa*, or renunciation in all organised religions, whether in the East or the West, is smothered by this figurative smoke. And the smoke hides reality—one is blinded by the outer show and ostentation that lie behind it is for ever unseen and hidden.

In the case of relinquishment, *tyaga*, however the position is quite different. In it there is no conscious giving up but things drop away. They drop away so quietly that one is not even conscious about it. The dropping away takes place unconsciously so that there is no effort on the part of self to renounce something. Arthus Koestler, the great thinker and author of recent times says:



Every creative act involves ... a new innocence of perception, liberated from the cataract of accepted beliefs.

The new innocence of perception that is the ground in which *tyaga* or relinquishment is possible. Here the mind is completely free from accepted beliefs, images, ideations, principles and conclusions. It is in the void—and there alone *tyaga* or relinquishment comes. The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks of renunciation of action and renunciation in action. Renunciation of action is usually accompanied by fanfare and rituals, by much pomp and show. Evidently the self or the ego enjoys it, for, it feels that it has the prospect of continued security. This renunciation is visible for all to see and gets the approval of people, particularly the devout and the religious. But this is so not merely in the religious field, it is equally true in the political and the social realm of one's life. There comes not only social and political approval but a veritable veneration because all are not capable of such renunciation. This renunciation invariably results in inflated self or the ego. The continuity of this self is assured. This is called *sanyasa* which may result in donning different attire to distinguish oneself from all and sundry who regard themselves as incapable of such "sacrifice". As Krishnaji says:

When a man renounces the world in order to achieve God, in order to find something greater, is that renunciation? If I give up this in order to find that, have I really given up anything? .... When I renounce this world and become a monk, or a very devout religious person, the motive is that I want to achieve something better—but that is still the process of the self, is it not? I may give up my name and just be a number in a religious order—but the motive is still there.

One may not become a *sanyasi*—a monk, but may adopt the ways of simplicity. But even here, if there is a flaunting and display of simplicity then that too may become like a flame with the smoke. And display whether of beauty or of wealth or of power or of virtue is vulgar and completely devoid of the fragrance that an act of simplicity would entail. If one makes a display of humility then it would be vulgar and jarring showing arrogance in the so-called form of humility. As Krishnaji says:

There can be simplicity only when the self with its accumulation ceases. It is comparatively easy to renounce family, property, fame, things of the world ... but it is extremely difficult to put away all

knowledge, all conditioned memory... Only when the mind is simple and vulnerable is it possible to see things clearly, in their true proportion .... Monastery is not the solution.

But when simplicity is sought to be brought about through conscious effort then that simplicity has no perfume. Kabir said in one of his couplets:

The hunger of the body is small and limited, of small measure but the hunger of the mind is unlimited. It remains hungry even when it has swallowed food even in a large quantity. (22)

The hunger of the mind is unlimited and unsatiable. It is this hunger of the mind that motivates all conscious efforts of the human individual—whether material or so-called spiritual. It is this which emits smoke blinding all that want to see and understand. Kabir was forthright in exposing the hollowness of such spiritual or religious efforts. He said:

All demonstrable religious worship and ceremonial observances or the repeating of the so-called holy names are like playing with dolls. So long as the meeting face to face with the beloved has not taken place one can play about with these childish pranks. (23)

Nothing exposes these religious and ceremonial practices as utterly frivolous as Kabir has done. But most people are generally taken in by these pranks of outer and ceremonial religiosity. The genuine spiritual life is a silent affair, nothing ostensible about it. In the outer and noisy demonstration of religious or spiritual life there is the activity of the ego, the self even more dangerous than one's activity in so-called mundane and material things of life. When does the spring of spiritual life come? Once again Kabir tells us—

The body may perhaps be purified by going to places of pilgrimage, even material wealth can be purified by distributing alms generously—but the mind of man can be purified only when the eye of inner wisdom is opened through insight. (24)

An act of inspiration or insight is completely different from the act born of intellect. Insight is indeed born of inspiration. It is in inspiration that one experiences an overflow in one's consciousness. Without an overflow man is no better than a machine. There may be efficiency but



there is no ecstasy. But how does one come to the experience of inspiration? In inspiration there is no calculation and no measurement. Krishnaji speaking about inspiration says:

Have you not noticed that inspiration comes when you are not working for it? It comes when all expectation has ceased—when mind-heart is still .... Mind has the power to create illusion, and without understanding its ways to seek inspiration is to invite self-deception. Inspiration comes when we are open to it, not when we are courting it. To attempt to gain inspiration through any form of stimulation leads to all kinds of delusion.

Very often, most often, we are under self-delusion and we call it a state of inspiration. People work themselves up for gaining inspiration. But this is the surest way of getting involved in a condition of delusion. Inspiration comes—it cannot be sought after. It comes when one is not aware of its coming. It is known only when it arrives. But does this awareness not need earlier preparation?

In fact, all that is needed is a state of openness—not open to something, but just openness, because an openness to something is a closed state. Inspiration may come from anywhere, at any time. Sometimes people go to temples and shrines, to prayers and meditations with the so-called open mind. And one comes away from such an exercise with seeming and so-called inspiration. One gets what one expects—and this is indeed the state of self-delusion. Mind has many costumes and it puts on a costume that is considered holy, and because one has put it on it believes that it has been endowed with the blessing of inspiration. Kabir says:

Mind has many colours and changes them as required by situations and occasions. One that is immersed in one colour—such is indeed a rare individual. (25)

To change colour is like putting on a suitable regalia. The putting on of a special regalia is not a precondition for inspiration. It is like dressing up for an occasion to maintain the requirements of social or so-called spiritual etiquette. Very often the state of meditation is converted into putting on a special regalia—the more gorgeous the better. A person may be sitting in an indifferent posture—but the moment the word meditation is uttered then he sits up, takes a particular posture, closes the eyes and hands are brought to a particular position—all this is regarded as essential for the so-called meditation. To sit erect is good and to

regularise one's breathing is also good—but these by themselves do not constitute a *must* for the purposes of meditation. The great Arabian mystic, Father Lawrence said: "He experienced the presence of God while working in the kitchen". One would not expect feeling the presence of God in such a mundane situation.

To be inspired is indeed to experience the presence of reality—not to be with an image or a concept or a picture of reality. The very presence of reality brings about a natural transformation—and all spiritual experiences indicate natural and spontaneous transformation—not a laboured one. And so for this, one has to be natural. But natural does not mean habitual. A habit is a conditioned state of mind—but a natural state pre-supposes a complete freedom from all habits—not freedom from the so-called bad habits—but from both good as well as so-called bad. A habit is a groove—in our so-called meditation we want to remain in a particular groove and seek to deepen it. A spiritual experience demands a state of total freedom, internal, not merely outer freedom. It is not a studied state of consciousness—for all studied poses are the result of one's conditioning. An inspiration comes only in such a natural state—where the consciousness is receptive but not expectant.

What is the measure by which one can know that a person is really inspired—and how is a person sure that he is in the presence of God or reality? Can such a feeling be not a case of self-delusion? The so-called presence may be just another image or concept or just an ideation? It can be—but he who has experienced the presence is a person who does not have to prove either to himself or to others that he is an inspired individual—that he has experienced the presence of God. Kabir says:

I see my Lover everywhere. I am the beloved for I want to see my Lover and the very sight of the Lover has transformed me. I was transformed in my Lover's image. (26)

How does this transformation occur, not in the duration of time but instantaneously. One can understand changes occurring slowly in the process of time—but how does it happen suddenly, in an instant? What is the nature of this presence? If it is not an image or a picture, nor a concept nor ideation, then what is the experience of this mystical presence? Kabir says:

That the drop enters the sea and becomes the sea—all know it. But the sea enters the drop and becomes the drop is known only by the few. (27)



The sea becoming the drop is a mysterious event that the man of true spirituality knows. It is to this that Edwin Arnold refers in his *Light of Asia*, but here it is half-truth for the poet says that the dew-drop slips in the sea which is the condition of *nirvana*. But H.P. Blavatsky says in her *Voice of the Silence* that the spiritual experience is where the drop has merged into the sea—no, it is the sea that has entered the dew-drop. The sea entering the drop is indeed the quintessence of spiritual life. And the entering of the sea in the dew-drop is not gradual, merging bit by bit into the dew-drop—it is sudden and instantaneous. In the very presence of the lover the beloved becomes the lover—there is then no duality of the lover and the beloved. But how does this happen—what is the secret of this sudden transformation?

How does the experience of the presence come? Is it the mind that sees it? If the presence is other than mind's conceptualisation or ideation then what is it, and how does it enter human consciousness? Reality is not an image nor is it an ideation. It is not discovered by image building, however subtle and abstract it may be. It is not found by sensorial responses. Then how?

In *Kena Upanishad*, which is one of the major Upanishads, the pupil tells the teacher that he is not interested to know the how and the why of things—his interest is not to know the science or the philosophy pertaining to the life process. He is interested in the who. That indeed is the meaning of the word *Kena*—who does all that happens in life? Who enables the eye to see and the ear to hear? Who is the spirit behind all the phenomenal activities? That is what the pupil wants to know. The how may explain the process and the why may enumerate the causes of the phenomenal happenings. But who is the entity that does this—that impels all things in the visible world? The answer that the teacher gives is most mysterious. He says:

It is the Ear of the ear, the Eye of the eye, the Word of the words,  
the Mind of the mind and the Life of the life.

What indeed is the Ear of the ear and the Eye of the eye? The medical science, with all its progress in modern times, has not discovered the Ear of the ear and the Eye of the eye. Then what is it? It is something intangible which the eye cannot see nor can the ear hear it. The *Kena Upanishad* further says:

What cannot be spoken with words but whereby words are spoken,  
know that alone to be Brahman, the spirit and not what people here

adore.

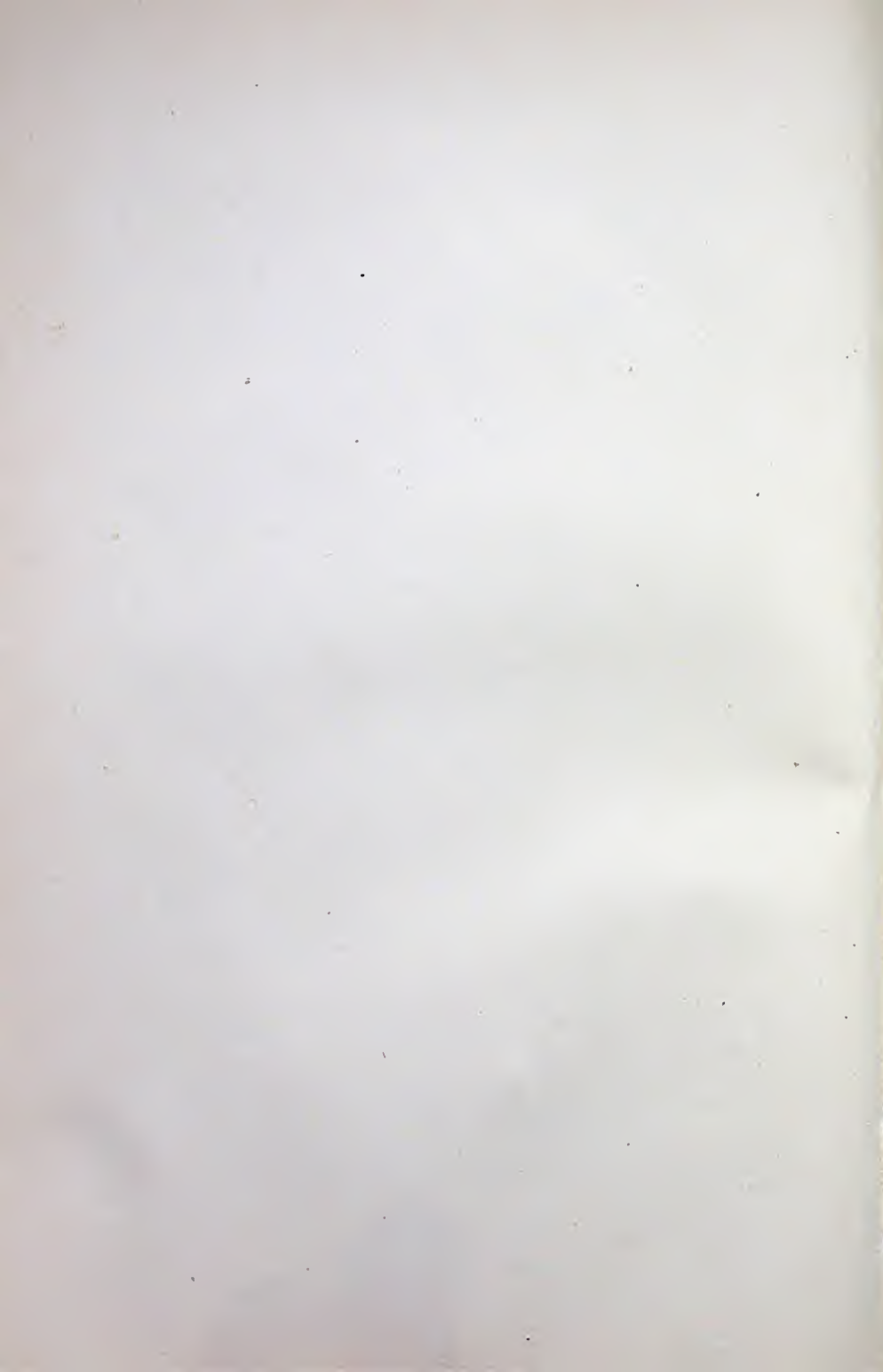
What cannot be thought with the mind but whereby the mind can think know that alone to be Brahman, the spirit and not what people here adore.

What cannot be seen with eye but whereby the eye can see know that alone to be Brahman and not what people here adore.

What cannot be heard with the ear, but whereby the ear can hear, know that alone to be the Brahman, the spirit and not what people here adore.

But if what the eye cannot see and the ear cannot hear, what the speech cannot speak and what the mind cannot think—how does one experience it? This is the secret that is vouchsafed to man when the mind is emptied of all its contents, when the mind is silent, but, not dull, when the mind is quiet but not asleep. It is to the sensitive mind that this secret is conveyed. When the mind is utterly negative but not dead—it is there that the secret of who—*Kena*—the spirit is known and discovered. There is a flame that is ablaze but emitting no smoke, the flame that is clear and reveals in its benign light the nature of that which is for ever intangible and unknown to the senses and the mind.





## IX

### ALONE BUT NOT LONELY

MOST OF US at some time or the other have passed through moments of loneliness. We did not like it and made feverish attempts to come out of its suffocating atmosphere. Loneliness is felt when one suddenly finds oneself left without any company, without anything to entertain oneself, without a book or without anything to amuse one. This experience comes when we are, as it were, left high and dry. Whenever we have been faced with such a situation, we have sought many an escape out of this experience—escapes of a divergent nature. It may even be going to a religious discourse. One may go to nature to find some solace. But all escapes out of loneliness do not give relief, for when it is over we are once again in the same feeling of loneliness—or perhaps worse. One shudders to have a repetition of such an experience. And that is why one clings to whatever is available lest it may go and desert one. One holds on to persons, things, situations and happenings or even to ideas and ideations. In fact one clings on to what memory brings—not something depressing but something that is considered as enjoyable.

The lonely man takes recourse to fantasy and reverie, he wants to live in the realm of imagination. He wants to run away from the realities of life... because these realities are too depressing and too uninviting. But the stream of memory brings us again and again to the depressing situations of life. In other words, loneliness is an experience which one wants to avoid, to run away from.

There is however an experience of aloneness which is not the opposite of loneliness. It is of a different category having its distinct quality. Krishnaji says:

In those moments of complete aloneness which only comes when all escapes and their significance have been truly discerned, is there the blessedness of the present.



It has to be remembered that aloneness is not isolation, not a feeling of separateness; not wanting to avoid company of man and nature. In fact, in aloneness there is the real meeting with others, a state of communion with man as well as nature—not a mere company but a real communion. One can be completely alone even in the midst of a crowd—not in a state of withdrawing from all, but, a state of most intimate communion with all. Plotinus, the great European philosopher said—that a spiritual journey is 'A flight of the alone to the Alone.'

When can one meet one's beloved? Surely when one is alone—not in a crowd! It is not at all necessary to move away from the crowd in order to have the experience of aloneness. Aloneness is not an experience away from the people. It is not a withdrawal into oneself. It is not a state of being absent-minded. It certainly is not a condition where the mind is wool-gathering. It is a state which is wide awake and yet totally alone. In a state of aloneness a person is not inaccessible. Krishnaji says:

Very few of us are alone, we do not want to be alone. It is essential to understand that aloneness is not isolation. Surely there is a difference between being alone, and isolation. Isolation is the sense of being enclosed, the sense of having no relationships, a feeling that you have been cut off from everything. That is entirely different from being alone which is to be extraordinarily vulnerable.

A vulnerable person is surely approachable by all—quite the reverse of one who is in isolation, desiring to be away from all people, one that shuns all company. How can one be alone and yet in the company of others? It is not a dreamy condition.

The state of aloneness is indeed being in a state of love. But then what is love? It is not being sentimental nor is it a condition of intense attachment, it is not even a state of effervescence. Kabir said:

Everyone speaks of love, but nobody says what love is. To be extraordinarily sensitive all the twentyfour hours is indeed love  
Love exists in a soil that is always and ever soft and moist. (28)

Love is not a condition of weakness—it is being firm and flexible like the bamboo tree. It is not rigid and so it cannot be uprooted due to its suppleness and flexibility. Love is a state which is not conditioned by the process which is time. Kabir says at another place:

When the heart is full of love then there is no calculation and no

measurement. When one is filled with love where is the counting of days and dates? (29)

The state of love alone brings a revelation of truth or reality. But the condition of love is the condition of absolute aloneness—not of isolation. Krishnaji says:

Love has no motive, it is its own eternity . . . . If you observe what makes us stale in our relationship is thinking, thinking, thinking, calculating, judging, weighing, adjusting ourselves, and the one thing that frees us from that is love which is not a process of thought. You cannot think about love. You can think about the person whom you love—but you cannot think about love.

It has to be understood that love is neither personal nor impersonal . . . or, more truly, one might say it is both personal as well as impersonal. It is a paradox which love alone can resolve—thought can never do it. In Sri Aurobindo's Epic poem *Savitri*, Ashvapati, the king, during his journey to discover the secrets of the mind comes to a place where he raises the question—After all what is the purpose of creation—why did the Creator create it? And he gets the answer which says: 'To evoke a person in the impersonal void'.

Love grows and emerges from the soil that can be characterised indeed as impersonal void. Love manifests itself in myriads of behaviour patterns—but they all arise from the ground of the impersonal. If there is an evoking of the person then the love that is born there will result in attachment, but if there is no awakening of the person then the love that exists is dry having no quality of flexibility. Love is neither attachment nor detachment. Kabir said this by saying that there is no emotional exuberance nor is there a dry matter-of-factness. It is very often said that love is blind—the fact of the matter is that it is not blind—but it sees more. It sees that which the mind, not even the most brilliant mind, can see. It is like what the *Kena Upanishad* says—the eye cannot see nor can the ear hear—but what sees is the Eyes of the eye and what hears is the Ear of the ear. Love sees this and hears this—and it is love and love alone that can give the perception of truth or reality. Krishnaji says:

When there is smoke, how can there be the pure flame? Love is not the thing of the mind and love is the only solution to our problems.

The problem of discovering reality is of a three-fold nature—it is to



discover the known, the unknown and the unknowable. So far as the discovery of the known is concerned it is done by science in a magnificent manner—the science of the physical and the superphysical or extra-sensorial. So far as the unknown is concerned it comes under the realm of philosophy—philosophy in its broadest aspect. It is fundamentally related to the finding out of the why of things. There is *something* which cannot be known by the mind—neither the scientific nor the philosophical. The mind can explore the field of the manifest and also the field of the unmanifest. By this exploration it comes to the end of the known and the unknown. There it must stop, for it cannot go further. It is here that the perception of reality comes—at the meeting point of the unknown and the unknowable. The unknowable cannot be known, but its intimations can be experienced, but only where the unknown and the unknowable meet. It is a ring-pass-not for the mind. Unless the mind comes to the point of the unknown it can receive no intimations of the unknowable. These intimations come only in a state of aloneness. It is in this state of aloneness that there is the meeting of the unknown and the unknowable. As Krishnaji says: 'Only to the alone can the causeless come, only to the alone is there bliss'.

The experience of aloneness cannot be measured in terms of time—it may be momentary or it may last longer. When it lasts longer it means that there have been the arrival of such moments constantly. The moments have no relevance to continuity. Moments that continue are the other name for time duration. They come constantly meaning thereby that between two moments there is an interval—long or short—in the flux of time. Thus in the experience of the moment there are intervals of time duration. Time and timeless—both are cognised in the awareness of the constant arrival of moments. One cannot stay in the moment—it has to be experienced—not possessed. It is in the moment of split-second that the perception of reality comes. But the awareness of the moment comes only in the state of aloneness. Writing about aloneness, Krishnaji says:

The aloneness of which I am speaking is pure, incorruptible; it is free from all tradition, of all dogmas and opinion, of everything that another has said. When the mind is in this state of aloneness, it is quiet, essentially still, not asking for anything, and such a mind is capable of knowing what is true.

To say that mind is capable of knowing that which is true—is this statement not a contradiction in terms? We have said earlier that mind is



incapable of knowing truth or reality—and yet here we are speaking of mind knowing the truth. It has to be understood that it is only when the mind becomes mindless that this perception of the true and the real comes. In one of the *Upanishads*, the *Svetaswara Upanishad*, there is a statement that mind must become mindless. Here the mind ceases to be mind, casting away all its normal and legitimate functions. Here the mind is just a vessel in which reality pours itself. Just a vessel, a mere container—and no more. But why must there be a vessel? Because there must be a medium of communication—to communicate what has been received. If there is no such means of communication then the elixir received in the moment of the perception of reality will be an utter waste. It has to be remembered that while the mind can give no experience of communion, it can serve as an effective instrument of communication. Communion without effective communication would be like allowing the waters of life to be wasted in the desert of existence. But for the mind to be an effective channel of communication, two things are necessary—the channel must be empty and it must have no leakages. The channel must not contain anything of its own, for if it has then the waters of reality poured into it will get dirty and polluted. If it has leakages then the waters of reality poured into it will go utterly waste. Communion and communication, giving and receiving is the rhythm of life. Living is healthy when this rhythm is maintained. If one only wants to give or if one only wants to receive and not give then it is a very unhealthy state. And so communication is essential to the process of living. If so communication needs a vessel which receives. And the vessel must be able to contain what it receives. Experience and expression is the same way of living. One may express by whatever medium one has or one is able to evolve. Language, gestures, silence—these are the usual ways of expressing. If there is communication but no communion then the communication is lifeless, devoid of vitality. But if there is communion but no communication then there is a feeling of frustration as many saints and mystics have experienced. Usually teachers and seers adopt the traditional language patterns, those that are accepted by convention. They confine themselves to the limits and boundaries of tradition. But there have been seers who have discarded traditional language and have evolved their own language. These seers have such vitality of experience that the common and the traditional language forms have been discarded by them. Among these seers and teachers one may mention definitely the names of Kabir and Krishnaji. They used the usual language but gave to the words and expressions a new meaning imparted by them out of their experience. Kabir said:

The teacher who whispers a word or a *mantra* in the ear of the disciple is one who functions within the limits and boundaries of tradition. The teacher who discards these limits is quite different—when one finds such a teacher then the work of the pupil is done. (30)

He again says at another place:

Everyone has remained within the bounds of tradition and convention—hardly any one has crossed these limits. Kabir is playing in the open and limitless spaces beyond the limits and boundaries of tradition. (31)

Here we find a clear expression of a living message. Those who have spoken the living language of spiritual life have refused to be confined and restricted in the language of convention. Experience must be expressed. Krishnaji says:

.... a mind that thinks along traditional lines cannot discover that which is new. By conforming we become mediocre imitators, cogs in a cruel social machine..... When we conform to tradition we soon become mere copies of what we should be..... Tradition inevitably cripples and dulls the mind.

Here we have to understand the mere breaking the tradition for the sake of breaking it; it is still within the confines of tradition—a negative tradition. Such expressions made out of a reaction are once again mediocre expressions. The sayings of Kabir and Krishnaji have a living quality born of great vitality imparted by living truth.

We have seen that the perception of truth comes in the timeless moment, however its expression requires the duration of time. Thus time and timeless constitute the rhythm of life—and in the maintenance of that rhythm the vitality of truth is experienced and effectively communicated. Sri Aurobindo said in his poem the *Savitri*: 'The moment sees, the ages toil to express.'

The seeing, the experiencing is in a moment—but its expression requires the field of time. The *Upanishad* says that from the threshold of truth "mind and speech both return having failed to find that truth". No thought can enter the inner precincts of truth or reality. It is only when the mind and the speech have become still that truth is discovered. And after the discovery speech that communicates has a superb vitality—it is

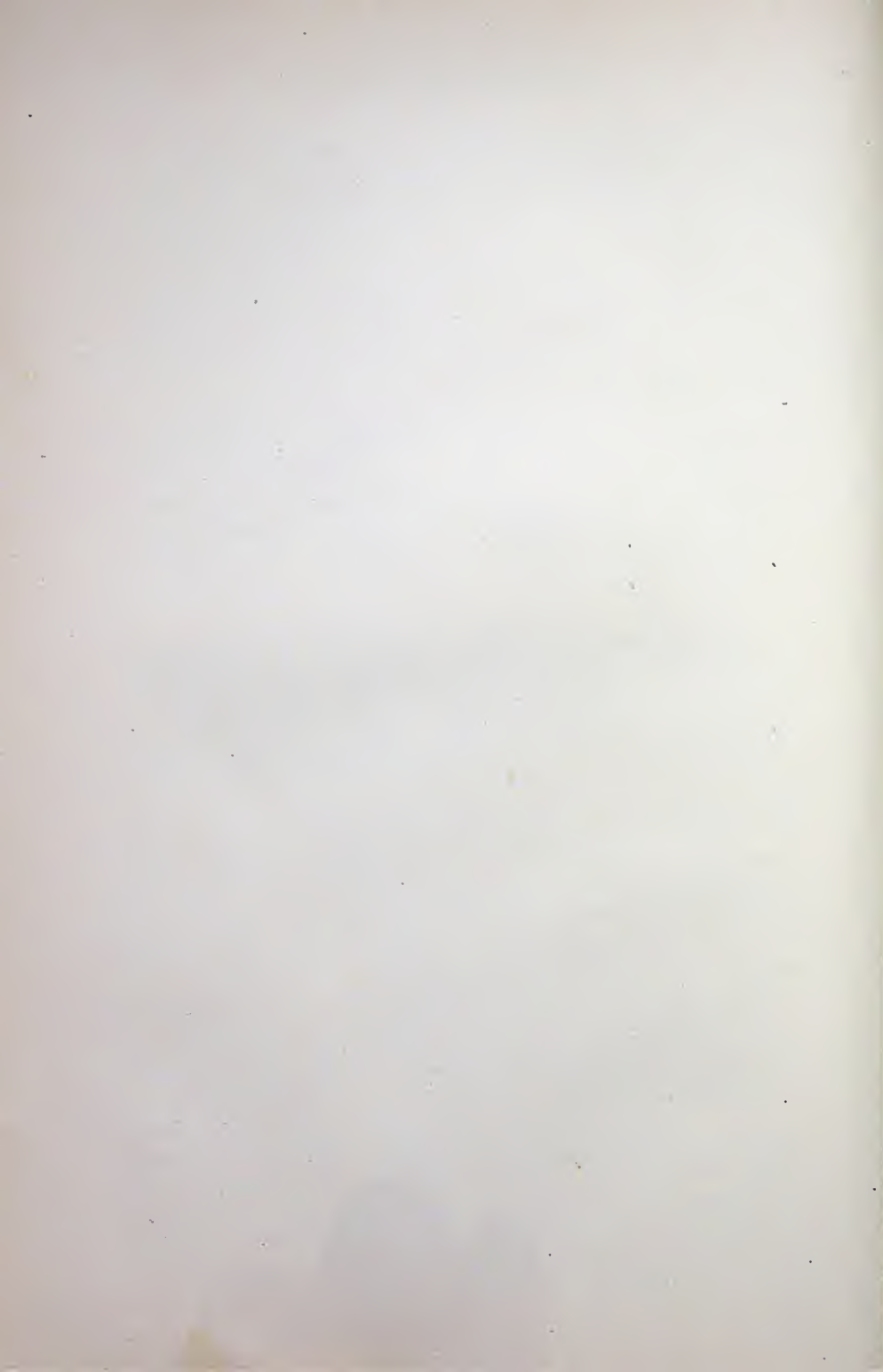


a living language that mystics and seers of all ages have spoken.

But the question is—when does the experience of the moment come? It comes only in the state of aloneness. It comes not necessarily in the quiet of the outer noise—the outer noise may continue or may not—but it is in the inner silence that the whisper of the soul is heard—and there alone. Aloneness is not the experience of separation or isolation. Even in the midst of the crowd, there can be the experience of aloneness where the inner voice is heard. And action, true action, emerges out of this silence. Krishnaji says:

Between two thoughts there is a period of silence which is not related to the thought process. If you observe you will find that that period of silence, that interval, is not of time, and the discovery of that interval, the full experiencing of that interval is liberation from all conditioning.... But there can be no silence as long as there is a seeker.

For the experience of silence the seeker must go. If the seeker goes then who seeks? That is the crux of the inquiry—Without there being the entity who experiences silence the regenerating silence? The essential question is not how—but who? The inquiry concerning the who is much deeper than the inquiry concerning the how. Into this inquiry must be the movement in search of spiritual light, this indeed is the silence of aloneness.





## X

### FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE

FREEDOM AND BONDAGE has been a perennial theme in all literature dealing with religious and spiritual philosophy, whether in the East or in the West. In Eastern religions it has been discussed under the common title of *karma*. Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have dealt with this subject exhaustively and in great detail. The word, *karma*, signifies two things—action, and also the fruit or result of action. In Christianity, too, there is a mention of this when it is said—‘Reap as you sow,’ meaning that one will reap only what one has sown. In Islam there is a concept of the day of judgment wherein it is said that all the souls will be called by the Creator on this day, and justice will be meted out to each according to what he has done or what he has not done. Thus *karma*, in one form or the other, is to be found in all the great religions of the world. *Karma* is one aspect of religious philosophy with which all human beings are concerned, for, it touches their daily life. *Karma* brings joy and sorrow, happiness or unhappiness. Most people cannot feel proud of their past because of the errors and mistakes committed by all. *Karma* is, by and large, associated with sorrows and sufferings, the cause of one’s bondage. To be free from the fruits of *karma* committed in the past is the one theme in which humanity is primarily interested. Freedom from the bondage of *karma* is the one cry which human beings utter whether in the East or in the West. How is one to be free from this bondage?

There are all types of theories propounded by religious teachers for achieving this freedom—and these conflicting theories by and large confuse people. They go after teachers and turn to scriptures to find a way out of this problem of human suffering. The great teacher Shankaracharya said “Both freedom and bondage are the illusions created by the human mind”. But that is not the common experience of man. *Karma* is very much of a bondage and therefore a search from this bondage to find freedom is very much real to all concerned. But we shall

turn to this remarkable teacher and his seemingly strange instruction a little later in the book for, it deserves serious consideration.

The law of *karma* is very often described as the law of retribution. But surely life or nature is not so cruel as to indulge in acts of retribution. The law can be truthfully described as the law of harmony. Life is a whole and so harmony disturbed at one place affects and disturbs life everywhere. This harmony is delicately balanced so that even the slightest movement of disharmony affects all aspects of life, near and distant. The principle of harmony indicates a state of wholeness, for that is indeed the quality of life. Everything is related to everything else—nothing is in isolation. And so the phenomenon of *karma* has also to be understood in this background of wholeness. However the usual approach to *karma* discusses it as the problem of cause and effect—the effect as separated and isolated from the cause. When the effect is seen as separate from the cause then the livingness of relationship is snapped. The fact of the matter is that cause and effect are not two separate and distinct happenings. There is the phenomenon of cause-effect and not cause and effect. It is this separation between the two that has created the problem of *karma*. Krishnaji writing about *karma* says:

... *Karma* is the bondage to cause-effect. As thought itself is the result of many cause-effects, it must extricate itself from its own bondage.... Cause and effect are inseparable—in the cause is the effect.

The effect is in the cause—they cannot be separated. Besides cause-effect relationships is not static as is commonly understood. We take effect separately and try to inquire as to what is the cause of it. This search for cause away from the effect is a frustrating process. If in the cause lies the effect and if in effect is embedded the cause—then the inquiry has to be to seek out the cause in the effect. This is necessary because the effect is visible whereas the cause is lost in the past. If the past resides in the present then it is obvious that the field of inquiry must be the present. Kabir says 'beware of one who does not open the fist'. He says:

Beware of the person who keeps his fist closed and does not open it. (11)

In the closed fist of the present lies the secret of the past. The present alone can reveal the past—and *karma* is essentially concerned with the



presence of the past in the present.

The effort of man has gone awry for he wants to understand the past away from the present. Among the Hindus *karma* has been classified in a threefold manner—the accumulated *karma*, the operative *karma* and the *karma* that is performed in the present. The accumulated *karma* is something unknown—it is spread over a vast area of the past. To try to know the accumulated *karma* is meaningless and utterly frustrating. One can only speculate about it. Besides the *karma* lost in the past cannot be separated and linked to a particular effect. It is an unidentifiable compound, mixed up with so many happenings. It is like finding out a needle in a haystack. But the accumulated *karma* is present here and now in the present. And the operative *karma* reveals this entire past. At present it is a closed fist containing the secret of the entire past.

But who makes this entire past operative, what is known in the *karma* terminology as *Prarabdh Karma*? Is the past separated from the present? If so, it can never become operative, one has no problem of *karma* at all, for then it becomes an irrevocable past. But the past is not separate from the present and that is why we have said that cause and effect have not been regarded as separate but together as cause-effect. What is the link between the past and the present? It is memory that makes the accumulated *karma* operative in the present. It is in this operative part that the cause-effect can be discovered. But again it is mind through the operation of memory that creates the fictitious problem of cause and effect. Mind splits up that which is integrated and creates fragments and tries to find out the cause of one fragment out of the many fragments. It is the fragmenting mind that creates a problem where it does not exist. Kabir says:

If earth splits due to excessive heat then the coming of rain is the solution, if cloth is torn then it can be stitched with thread, if body is torn then one can find suitable medicine to repair the body—but when the mind is split and torn then there is no ready-made remedy. (32)

It is the fragmented mind that has created problem of cause and effect—and once caught in the web of this illusory problem, one is for ever lost in it. But the important problem associated with *karma* is the effect and the influence of the past. Can past be erased? Can fate be changed? If not, man has to face a lot of suffering due to actions done in the past. It is the presence of the past which complicates the problem of *karma*. One may be absolutely correct and righteous today, but has he not to pay the price of



the sins and omissions of yesterday? Is not *karma* a never ending chain? Can man ever escape the nemesis, the onrush of the past? However, Krishnaji says:

*Karma* is not a never-ending chain. It is a chain that can be broken at any time. What was done yesterday can be undone today—there is no permanent continuance of anything. Continuance can and must be dissipated through the understanding of the process.

Here Krishnaji utters words of great solace that the chain of *karma* can be broken at anytime—but for this the process by which the chain is made and maintained must be understood. It is not that one is for ever a slave of the past. With regard to the operations of *karma* one tends to become fatalistic—one begins to accept the working of *karma* as inexorable. But what is meant by the understanding of the process? *Karma* is a process—not just an event. An event may be regarded as separate and isolated. If so, it has to be treated one by one. In a process nothing is isolated, each is linked to every thing else. If so, the chain of *karma* can be broken at any time. But how? The chain seems to be unbreakable, and one appears to be helpless against the rumblings of the past. In the Buddhist book *Visuddhi Magga*, it is said:

Mere suffering exists, no sufferer is found. The deeds are but no doer of the deeds is there. *Nirvana* is, but not the man that enters it. The path is but no traveller on it is seen.

Krishnaji puts the same question—if there is the seeker how can search be done? The seeker has to go if the search has to proceed. Similarly if there is no sufferer how can suffering exist? In fact life gives to none any problem, it offers to no one the pangs of suffering. It only gives to all changing circumstances. The circumstances must change, for that is how life functions. It is all the time in a state of flux, and so nothing can just stay put. In the flux of life, circumstances change and must change. That is all that life offers to man, but this changed circumstance is transformed by man into a problem. And with this transformation suffering is born. Suffering does not exist by itself—what exists is only the change of circumstance.

But how does man transform this mere change of circumstance into a problem? It is by memory and anticipation that this change is brought about. To understand this is to cognise the process by which the chain of *karma* operates. Memory and anticipation are not two different things—

anticipation is the creation of memory itself. The question also is—Why does the mind of man bring about this change—and be for ever in the throes of suffering? If the mind does not do this transformation then it has to face the problem of a change in the circumstances of life. It must face the situation as it happens to be. Strangely enough mind does not want to face anything which is not of its own creation. It prefers to live in the world or its own creation—not in the world that is offered to it by nature. Mind creates for itself the bonds of suffering and gets involved in its own creation for ever.

Very often people say that in order to get out of the difficulties of life what one has to do is to accept what comes. Accept the situation as it comes, and we are told that that would be the way of getting out of the difficulties of life. But to accept something involves the question of choice. There can be no acceptance unless there is the rejection of its opposite. Thus one is caught into the conflict of opposites or of dualities. And so in acceptance of a situation there is all the time present the factor of expectation—and so really one does not accept what is, but the expectation that is implied in such so-called acceptance. And so in the so-called acceptance one hopes to have one's expectations fulfilled by such an action. Thus this advice of acceptance does not solve the problem because one still continues to suffer because the expectation is not fulfilled.

The question still persists—Can fate be changed? Will not fate fulfil itself in spite of all the efforts of man to avoid it? But one may ask does fate exist? Or is fate the name given by the mind to something it fears? And very often what the mind fears does happen because the mind has through its fear created strong image of what will happen. And this strong image does actually materialise. Fate is only the name given by the mind to that which it does not want to encounter. Fate has no existence *per se*. It is fear that brings it into existence. Krishnaji says:

It is in the very process of running away from what is that fear arises ..... Fear is the product of thought. Fear in every form is thought in action, with the past through the present and to the future. I am afraid of what will happen and I am afraid of something which I have done in the past which I want to cover up.

It is thought which is the creator of fear. The mind has conjured up the word "fate" and is for ever afraid of it—sees it where it does not exist. It projects what it is afraid of—and this it does by strong and vivid imagination. It fails to see what is—it sees what it expects to see. Thus



fate has no existence by itself—it is the creation of imagination born out of fear. Krishnaji says—“What was done yesterday can be undone today”. Is this really possible? Can the effect of the past be eliminated? If so, man need not be afraid of the future in which he sees the working out of the errors of the past. But is this possible? The Hindu philosophers spoke of the rope being mistaken for the snake. How does it happen? When mind is afraid of the snake, it projects it wherever it is in the midst of uncongenial situation. And then he sees the non-existent snake in situations which he confronts and what he imagines, he seems to be seeing snake as actually existing. Kabir says:

You hold the hand and feel the touch of the fingers but the mind is moving elsewhere, you may say, whatever you like but you are holding on to only a wooden doll. The rosary moves in the hand, the tongue moves in the mouth but the mind moves all over; this surely is not an act of remembering God. (33)

Thus the mind wanders all over not enabling us to see what is. The whole mystery of *karma* can be understood only if one sees. How can *karma* be ever understood unless one sees the process of *karma* itself—how it comes into existence, how it is maintained and nourished. Not just an intellectual knowledge or information—but actually seeing the process. One must see how the accumulated *karma* tends to become operative.

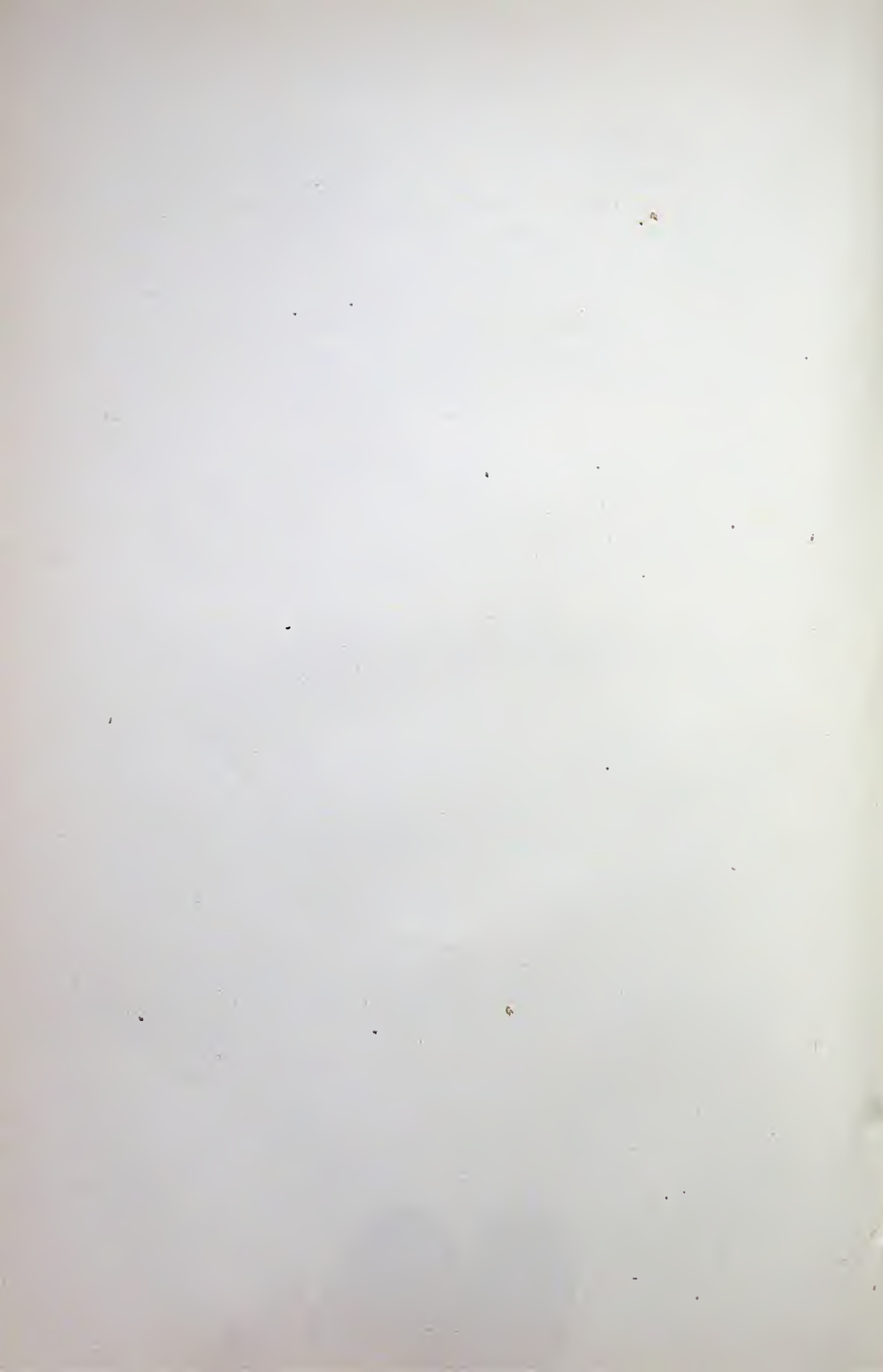
Is *karma* a real problem or is it merely fictitious, created by man's memory and imagination? Is one really in bondage or is bondage itself illusory as Shankaracharya says? In the scriptural text known as *Ashtavakra Gita*, the sage Ashtavakra replies to King Janaka who is the pupil:

Here lies your bondage in that you have installed another observer—instead you being the observer you have created another perceiver.

And perhaps all difficulties of life arise because of this spurious observer whose perception and judgments we accept and abide by. If the spurious observer says this is a snake and not a rope then we accept his judgment. It may be that this is at the root of the problem of *karma*, it is this which seems to transform a mere changed situation into a problem, a problem of vast proportions. Who is this spurious observer? What are its activities and how does it function? In the whole matter of freedom from the bondage of *karma*, in the whole question of spiritual life, it is this



spurious observer that seems to be the mischief-maker, the creator of sorrow and suffering to human beings. Unless we understand the activities of the spurious observer, how and why does it act in a particular manner—we cannot effectively deal with this immense problem of freedom and bondage.





## XI

### LOOK, LOOK: YOU HAVE NOTHING ELSE TO DO

KRISHNAJI very often used to say to his listeners at public meetings—Look, Look, Sirs, you have nothing else to do. This he used to say while speaking about deep problems of life. Can the problems of life be solved by just looking at them? Is it so simple as that? Does it not seem too simplistic? And yet, he always said to his audiences—Look, see at the problem of sorrow and suffering. We never see the problems and yet strive to solve them. Without understanding the problems we want to find out what can be the solution to these problems. We go to teachers, read scripture after scripture and try to mug up the answers given therein. And after that we struggle and yet do not come to the solution to these problems. We want to understand the problem intellectually—and then feel that we have known it. We have discussed earlier that mind never sees directly anything, particularly of psychological nature. Out of the information gathered mind creates an image, maybe a vivid image. And then decides to solve the problem. But this solution has reference only to the image, the mental image that has been formed. There is no wonder that one goes on grappling with it which it regards as a serious problem. There is no grappling with the problem but only with the image of it. And so man is engaged in a frustrating exercise. He wonders why the solution is not found: He goes after teachers and turns to other scriptures—but all this is of no avail. In the *Ashtavakra Gita*, the teacher says to the pupil:

If only you would separate yourself from the image you have created and then be completely relaxed. Then this minute, here and now, you will be happy, at peace and liberated.

Here and now—the liberation can come. Is it not too fantastic and unreal? Without knowing how the problem comes into existence—we want to solve it. We boast of science and scientific method. In our usual scientific studies we study the process by which a situation has arisen and then tackle the situation. But here in the happenings of life, we never look at the process and how it has developed. We seem to be thinking that life consists of separate and isolated events, and so one can take event after event and find out a solution. But life is not like that. Life is a process in which many strands are involved. There is the intricate pattern made by the warp and woof of life's threads. Without understanding this pattern of life—how it has been formed—to try to solve the problem of life is utterly meaningless. And yet this is what we do and yet boast about our scientific approach. The Buddha once put a problem to his disciples—How would you untie a knot? The pupils gave very learned answers, then the Buddha said: 'If you want to untie a knot, find out how the knot was tied.'

To strive at the un-conditioning of the mind, one must know how the mind gets conditioned. Krishnaji says:

The totality of our conditioning can be broken—not bit by bit, which takes time, but immediately, by directly perceiving the truth of the matter. It is the truth that liberates, not time or your intention to be free.

In order to be unconditioned one must know how one gets conditioned. We are being constantly conditioned by impacts not only from outside but also by impulses within. In fact there is no clear cut division between the outer and the inner. The inner projects itself in the outer and then we see it. We seem to be thinking that because we see it on the outer canvas, it exists only outwardly. And we make frantic efforts to change things outwardly—our behaviour patterns, our actions, our words and other forms of outer relationship. But these are of no avail because the outer has its roots inside. The outer is only a symptom of inner reality. The outer and the inner are a joint phenomenon. To tackle the problem outwardly is to cut the branches and the leaves—the root remains untouched, and the roots will put forth new leaves and branches. We can know the symptom but not to indulge in a symptomatic treatment. One may remove the symptoms but the disease still persists. We are not suggesting that symptoms should be overlooked—but as one medical man has rightly said—Do not look at the symptoms, look through the symptoms. Kabir said:



One who writes a letter is a letter writer; he is well versed in the traditions of writing. But where has the insight been written—it is all over; whenever you want to read it, it can be done anytime and everywhere.

The problems of life can be tackled not by the mind, not by the clever devices of the intellect—but only by insight which is everywhere, not hidden in the clever devices of the intellect. But the awakening of insight demands a clear and unfettered observation. The difficulty is we never observe. Krishnaji says:

To look there must be freedom from the image. And when you are free, you look—not with the intellect, not with emotion but with love, with clarity, with something totally new.

In order to look one has to be free from the image. Modern science, modern physics, talks about the "Looking-glass universe." They say the scientists are not looking at what it is—they are only looking at shadows, at their own projections just as one does in a looking glass. Now a looking-glass does not show us as we are—but ourselves reversed. Science also says that they do not see reality—but something that has been made into a reverse image. We too are dealing with images and that too reverse. How can we look at life unless we are free from the process of image formation? Mind cannot see anything directly—but only through an image. That is the way of the mind. Kabir said:

When I am there, God is not. The lane of love is so narrow that two cannot walk in that lane at the same time—when I am there He is not there, when He is there I am not. (35)

This is indeed the limitation of the mind and its functioning process. Either I see myself—or otherwise I am not there when He can be seen. In order to see the Truth, I, the observer must disappear. I must vanish if reality is to be perceived.

Krishnaji in his talks, over the years, has again and again spoken about the observer and the observed phenomena. We find in the *Yoga Sutras* of *Patanjali* this idea presented in a very short aphorism. He says:

It is the observer observed phenomenon which is the cause of human suffering.



It is the observer observed alliance which has to be broken. We forget that these two are not separate—the observer and the observed. The observer is the observed. This idea is being presented in the writings of modern physicists. John Wheeler says that we must say good-bye to the idea of an impersonal observer. He says that there is no objective, impersonal observer. We are living in a participating universe where the observer cannot be isolated from the observed. In fact this is the main theme of Quantum Physics. If so, what we observe is not independent of the observer. And so all our acts are vitiated by the presence of the observer. This may not matter much when we are concerned with non-psychological field of observation. But the moment we enter the field of psychological interests then the participation of the observer is in great abundance. Krishnaji says:

When you observe a tree, if you have ever done it, when you look at a tree your mind never observes the tree, it observes the image it has created about a tree and that image is always moving, it is never quiet. It is being added to and taken away from. It is only when the mind is very quiet, really observant, without any movement that it observes the actual fact of the tree.

The question is—what is the material out of which the mind brings images into existence? But before we examine this question, the important subject of inquiry is—Why does mind create an image—why does it not see anything directly without the intervention of the image? This the mind does for its own security and continuity. Because life is always in a state of flux. Nothing stays, everything is moving—at least it appears as moving. Whether flux is the nature of life or is it also perceptive projection? We need not go into this question here—we will consider it later. But there is no doubt that life appears to be a state of flux. And mind feels insecure being caught in this flux. It tries to project a state that is static so that it remains and allows the mind to hold it and examine it. It is this which brings into existence mind's images. The image is something which can be held as long as mind desires it. The formation of the image and holding it gives to the mind a sense of security and safety. And so it transforms all phenomena into images—something static in the midst of all round flux.

But what is the material from where mind creates these images? Surely from associative memory. But associative memory flourishes in the background of incomplete experiences. It is the incomplete experience which is the breeding ground of associative memory. If the

experience is complete there is no material left for the associative memory to work upon. Events seem to move away, they do not persist. The movement of events is known as the flux of life or nature. In the midst of the everlasting flux of events, it is experience which the mind tries to hold on to. And in the midst of the completion of events, there comes into being the phenomenon of incomplete experience. It is in the ground of incomplete experiences that associative memory takes root. And these memories supply the material for the birth of images with which the mind plays about—now modifying, now retaining as they are. H.P. Blavatsky speaks about the mind as “thought producer—he who creates illusion.” The mind is the creator of illusion—the creator of images. It is these images that cast a veil over what is actually happening. It prevents one from seeing what it is. The image is the only reality which man perceives under the spell of the activities of the mind. The images are nourished and maintained by the associative memory which is the store-house of incomplete experiences.

It is quite evident that when experiences are completed there is no residue left with the result that the process of image building and its retention ceases. If this happens then no image will intervene between the observer and the event. There will then be a direct perception and therefore there will be no field in which associative memory can have any area in which to carry on its activities.

But how can one have a complete experience so that there takes place a synchronisation of the end of the event and the end of experience?

We saw earlier where Krishnaji says that *karma* created in the past can be wiped away—that the past need not be a prison-house from where a person cannot get his freedom. He says that the chain of *karma* can be broken at anytime, anywhere. What is the chain of *karma*? It is obviously the process of action and reaction. It is through reaction that the continuity of the chain is maintained. Through associative memory the past events are brought to the fore for mind’s attention. These past events seem to recur in the procession of associative memory. When this recurrence takes place then the mind is stimulated either with pleasure or with pain. This stimulation of the mind under the impact of the memory procession calls out a reaction. If the mind reacts, then there is given a new lease to the incomplete experience of the past. It is by a reaction in the present to the events of the past that new life is given to the continuity of the past. The chain of *karma* remains intact so long as the process of reaction flourishes. *Karma* is nothing but a chain of reaction. Action forms no chain at all for it is complete the moment it is over—it is reaction that gives continuity for it never allows action to be



completed—that event is complete but experience thereof remains incomplete.

Krishnaji says that the chain of *karma* can be broken any time. How is it broken? When one sees what is happening without any reaction. To perceive without any sign or symptom of reaction—is to experience the breaking of the chain of *karma*.

One is then not worried about the accumulated *karma* because it is the operative *karma*—the *prarabdha karma*. That is what man is afraid of. He associates it with fate—the inexorable destiny or *Niyati* as some philosophers call it. It is in the chain of action and reaction that the chain of *karma* persists. But if there is perception without any reaction to what one perceives, then is there the breaking up of the chain of *karmā*.

This can happen whenever the incomplete experience of yesterday and many yesterdays raises its head. It has not to be suppressed—nor is to be indulged in—but just observing what has come. It is observation that holds the key to the freedom from the bondage of *karma*. That is why we have entitled this chapter quoting the words of Krishnaji who says:

Look, Look, Sirs, you have nothing else to do. Just look at what the incomplete experiences of yesterday have brought.

The look at the demands of yesterday without any reaction either the positive or negative, is to see what it is and what it wants, and the nature of incompleteness that it contains.

The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks of action emerging from the ground of inaction. The *Gita* speaks of action, reaction, non-action and inaction. The ground of inaction is created when there is just the looking, the observation without any judgment, without any evaluation. Out of this arises action which can never bind.

There is indeed freedom from reaction when the ground of inaction comes into existence. It is all a question of just looking—observing without the observer. It is in breaking the ties of the observer and the observed that one discovers the way to freedom. Looking is not an excuse for not acting. There is neither a reaction nor a non-action—it is true action. But does the observer, the perceiver, vanish in a mere act of looking? It sounds incredible. And yet it is a fact if only one understands it. Neither resistance nor indulgence—it is there that the secret of one's freedom lies. But the ties of the observer and the observed are very strong. Does it get broken in the mere act of looking? And yet it is true what Krishnaji says—"Look, Look, Sirs, you have nothing else to do." Let us go into the mystery of Looking—for indeed it is a mystery, one of the greatest mysteries of Life.



## XII

### THE UNHOLY ALLIANCE

IT IS IN THE breaking of the unholy alliance that the secret of breaking the bondage and experiencing freedom lies so we are told. This unholy alliance may be called the alliance of the observer and the observed or that of the experiencer and the experienced, or it may be the unholy alliance of the thinker and the thought. We seem to be working on terminating this alliance at the level of the observed or at the level of thought. We seem to believe that if there is a change in thought or if there is a different scale of observation—the problem would be solved. One may change one's scale of observation but still we are only at a different state of the thought-thinker alliance. By changing the scale of observation we may see something else—and yet it will be only another image. We do not thereby come to direct seeing where we have an image-free perception. By changing the pattern of thoughts we do not get out of the image-bondage. And yet most of the religious or moral effort consists in moving away from the so-called bad thoughts to so-called good ones. This is only the dressing up of the image, adorning it with new clothes, attractive ones. Within the framework of this alliance there is indeed no freedom at all. To move from one process of dressing up to another is a frustrating process. The so-called *gurus* and teachers have put us into this game and we go on playing it continuously. The change of dress with which the image is adorned may seem attractive to us and we may feel delighted that the problem has been solved. But it is not solved, for there is still the veiled perception, not the direct one.

The problem essentially is to leave off this game of images and their change of attires. This play with images is too immature and childish. But how is one to break this image play? The solution is not changing one

doll for the other more grandly attired. The question is to get out of this game of dolls and images. But how?

Does this happen by destroying the images and dolls? And who will do it? Can one engage in doll-play and do it? If the player with the dolls discards one doll and takes up another then it only perpetuates the game—one is still in the game of images. How can the image be broken so that no other image is substituted for it? Substitution is no solution—this is sometimes called the act of sublimation. But sublimation is still the game of substituting better images for those that are not so good. It is like changing the vessel but the water remains the same. Can anger and lust be sublimated? If it is done then they have been given attractive garments—that is all, nothing further has been done. Speaking about virtue, Krishnaji says:

We must be aware of the cunning and devious ways of the self, and in understanding them virtue comes into being—but virtue is not an end in itself. Self-interest cannot cultivate virtue, it can only perpetuate itself under the mask of virtue—under cover of virtue there is still the activity of the self.

Surely the man who cultivates virtue is not virtuous. A conscious cultivation of virtue is only the perpetuation of the vice. Vice is regarded as abhorrent and so there is an effort to don it in respectable garments. All this activity is a part of the unholy alliance of the observer and the observed, the thinker and the thought. Any action done from a centre is ugly and mischievous. We are told we must live at the centre and move away from the circumference—but are the centre and the circumference, two different things? How can one exist without the other? The circumference is round about the centre—and the centre projects itself in the circumference. In one of the subtle aspects of the unholy alliance is the alliance between the centre and the circumference. The thinker is the centre to which thought brings into existence for its own continuity. But how is this alliance of the centre and the circumference to be ended? By creating another centre? Surely not. If the centre goes then from where is man going to act? Man needs a centre as focal point from where to build up his empire of activities. This centre may be ideals, principles or convictions. When this is there then he can organise his activities round about this centre created by himself. And he feels that he is a man of principles or ideals. He first feels he is not like others who have not established ideals and principles; he thinks himself as more holy and advanced because of this centre from where he carries on



what he regards as his noble activities. But who has created this centre? The man who is confused and in doubt creates a centre and regards himself as out of the ordinary. And so he hugs on to the centre and draws from there circle after circle—ever wider circumference of life. Sri Aurobindo says in his *Savitri*:

The ideal is a malady of the mind,  
A bright delirium of thy speech and thought,  
A strange wine of beauty lifting these to false sight,  
A noble fiction of thy yearnings made,  
Thy human imperfection it must share.

The formulation of this so-called centre shares the imperfections of man who establishes it. It is verily the disease of the mind and out of its illness creates its ideals and principles from where to carry on the same nefarious activities. It is a cloak to hide the same self that organises this new venture to hide its ugly intentions.

Krishnaji writing about ideals says:

The ideal is an escape from what you are.... The ideal is fictitious, ego made, and becoming an ideal is an escape from what is ..... Ideals are merely a means of postponing, an excuse to avoid bringing about a real change..... so the ideal is an impediment, a thing to be put away completely.

To put away ideals completely is a strange instruction given by a seer of the stature of Krishnaji. Kabir says:

To walk within limits is the activity of the ordinary human being... one who walks into the limitless is called a spiritual man but he who discards both the limit and the limitless is a person of transcendental vision. (33)

People ordinarily think that acting as per the ideals and principles is to aim at the limitless. However both the limit and the limitless are the creation of the mind. And so to play about in the circumference, or to put on the so-called holy garb of acting from the centre have no reality—they are the two faces of the same coin. And so the centre and the circumference is once again the same phenomenon of the unholy alliance.

Then how is one to act? To have no ideals and principles and just act blindly? Not to have an ideal or principle is itself another ideal or



principle. It is a negative one. But whether negative or positive—they are only the two sides of the same medallion. To have or not to have are fundamentally the same.

One may ask—Is love an ideal? Is it a principle of life? Is it a centre from where one acts? Is not the giving up of the centre a veritable death? The centre seems to be the only basis of action. If that goes what is life? Kabir says:

The world is afraid of death, but for me it is joy. When does one die and when does one live—this is immaterial for I am in a state of deep ecstasy. (40)

The elimination of the centre is dreaded by men, for, it takes away the very basis of existence. The play of the centre and the circumference is indeed the movement of life for most people.

But if centre and the circumference are in close alliance then how are they to be separated? They cannot be separated by any effort of the mind. They are not two; they indeed are one. When the centre withers away then there is no circumference at all. This separation is indeed the dissolution of the image. On the circumference is the play of the image or of the images. But can the image be dissolved? Does the mind deliberately make an image? Is the conscious effort of the mind involved in such image formation? It has to be remembered that thought itself is an image. Mind in its very thinking brings image into existence. In fact, image is the only language that mind knows. It is the process of image-building, of picturisation which is the integral part of thinking. To think is to evoke images. If thinking is desultory, slipshod then the images too are vague and indefinite. Such images have very little capacity to communicate. Mind's communication is through the medium of images. Those who possess super-sensory powers have noticed images formed in the world of thought. Mind is indeed an instrument of communication. In telepathic communication it is the image transmission that is employed. In an interesting book *The Mental Radio* by Upton Sinclair, one reads about the technique of image-transmission. The clearer the thought the more effective is the formation of images. Now there is no separate image building which the mind does—in the very act of thinking the images are formed.

And so one has not to make an effort to dissolve the images. In fact such an effort may bring into existence negative images—one is not free from the image-building process—it is only changed from the positive to negative images. In the cessation of thought the image is by itself

lissolved. But its dissolution has left its impression upon the mind—in that it has become an efficient and effective instrument of communication. And the mind must retain this capacity to communicate and transmit. Mind cannot bring one to the door of communion—that is outside its province. But communication is its forte, its legitimate sphere.

If that be the case then the process of thought must cease at the height of its functioning capacity. All thinking is in the field of concepts. As Krishnaji says—'As long as you have concepts, you never see what is true.'

Seeing what is true is the experience of communion. There thought cannot enter, for it functions in the field of duality. And where duality is there can be no direct perception. But image building belongs to the sphere of communication—but communication demands the process of thought whereas communion requires a cessation of thought. But the question is when must thought cease to function? In a dull mind there is no thought process or if there is it is very slow and almost dormant. If thought has ceased at this moment of dullness then no communication is possible. And without communication communion must result in utter frustration. And so the question does arise—and it is important—when must thought cease? Surely when the mind is very alert and logically flawless—it must be extraordinarily alert and active, highly intelligent. But will such an alert mind come to a cessation of thought. Will not thinking persist in such an active mind? How to bring it to a cessation of thought? Is it not a very difficult task? But again there is no meaning in a dull and an indolent mind coming to a cessation of thought. The mind at the height of its alertness must come to the cessation of thought, for then alone there is an effective and an efficient instrument of communication. The cessation of thought brings the experience of communion—and such an experience comes to an alert and an intelligent mind. And so communion finds a means of communication through which the communion can convey its message effectively. But how will the intelligent mind come to a cessation of thought—the mind that is seething with mental activity?

But what is an intelligent mind? It is one that knows its possibilities and the one that also knows its limitations. It knows where it can go and where lies its point of limitation—the area which is beyond its capabilities. It is the dull, the unintelligent mind that goes on moving in circles, not aware of the wall to which it has come, the wall which it cannot penetrate. It is this, which brings us to one of the important subjects which Krishnaji has dealt with again and again—it is awareness



and attention and the ego. Attention is impossible if there is no awareness. They are not identical. The mind that is aware alone can come to attention. We must examine the implications of awareness and attention for in the co-existence of these lies the key with which to unlock the mystery of the unholy alliance which is the great bugbear in one's spiritual endeavour. In awareness lies the awakening of intelligence and in attention lies the cessation of thought. There is the meeting of the positive and the negative—the masculine and the feminine. For in the co-existence of the two one comes to the inexhaustible fountain of energy—and without energy nothing can happen. The first *mantra* of Rig Veda the very first mantra, says:

I put Agni—the first, for without it, without the energy that it supplies, no movement on the spiritual journey can be undertaken.

How to tap the source of energy which lies in the co-existence of awareness and attention? Let us turn to it.



## XIII

### AWARENESS AND ATTENTION

IN HINDU MYTHOLOGY there is the description of Shiva, the First person of the Hindu trinity, as *Ardha-Narishwar*, half man and half woman. This has a great psychological significance, for it indicates a completely integrated state. Krishnaji in one of his talks given in London in 1965 said that the mind must be both man and woman at the same time. He said in his Saanen talks of 1966:

A mind that can meet a challenge with total energy is not creating a problem. It is only a mind that is responding to a challenge with a background, with its conditioning which is always inadequate that creates a problem.

To meet the challenge of life fully and totally, is the answer to the psychological problems of life. But what does meeting the challenge fully and totally mean? Firstly it means that the meeting of the challenge is free from all conditioning factors. In other words, it must be from the ground of Reaction, to use the terminology of the *Bhagavad Gita*, or from the ground of innocence. This is possible only when one's energy is functioning not compartmentally. Full energy is meeting the full challenge. We know that the functioning of energy needs two poles—the positive and the negative. The electrical energy is available only when the negative and the positive meet. If such meeting is absent then there is no release of energy and therefore no action. The state of innocence is a negative state, but this alone cannot create any force or activity. Action and inaction must exist together. This is called the co-existence of the masculine and the feminine. That is what is indicated in that aspect of Shiva wherein he is described half-man and half-woman. Krishnaji very often used to say that there must be passion without motive. This seems utterly impossible, for without motive there is no

stimulus, no incentive—and passion without an incentive is unthinkable. And motive supplies the incentive to act. Passion without motive appears like fire that is not active, the fire has been extinguished. And so passion with motive is our usual experience. But here energy cannot function at its full intensity. Motive breaks down the functioning of energy—and therefore the challenge of life, that is met is not totally, not fully, and therefore in such functioning problems come into existence. Here the challenge is not met fully and so experience remains incomplete—and all psychological problems arise in the ground of incomplete experiences as we have seen. And so for the completion of experience there must be the full and total response. Not merely with the mind alone nor with heart alone. There must be the fusion of the two, for this is a state where energy has not been compartmentalised as positive and negative, the two acting differently. In passion without motive—passion surely belongs to the heart and the state of motivelessness denotes a state of impersonal intellect. The person and the imperson must function together for there alone is there a state of integration. Krishnaji says:

The negation becomes the positive which is the state of innocence, of vulnerability.

The negative must become the positive—the masculine and the feminine must act together. Each one of us must become *ardhanarishwar*—half-man and half-woman. Here alone there is the intensity of passion and the undisturbed clarity of the intellect functioning together.

This state of integration has been specified by Krishnaji in the two terms he uses—awareness and attention. In fact he talks of choiceless awareness and totality of attention. The choiceless awareness indicates a state of innocence, of inaction of the *Bhagavad Gita*, and totality of attention denotes action, complete action, the action that leaves no residue. This indeed is the state of love—neither vapour of emotionalism nor ice of cold intellect—but that which is imbued with the living waters of life. Kabir said:

Too much of knowledge gathered by the cold intellect makes a man dull and immobile like a stone—too much of intellection may create a condition comparable to a brick—this happens where there is no spark of love. By reading books and scriptures one may become a scholar—but if the man knows the two and a half syllable word love, he is truly a learned man, not a mere dry scholar. (41)



Where there is mere dry intellect and no spark of love—such a person is disintegrated from within—and therefore disorganised in his outer life. Such a person may have awareness but fragmented and not integrated, and therefore his attention too is fragmented. Awareness is a feminine quality, negative in its nature, whereas attention is masculine and positive. This awareness must be extensive, and attention must have the quality which contains totality. They together hold the secret of life's mystery.

But what is extensive awareness? It is awareness that is not broken up—it takes the *whole* in its purview and the attention that emerges is total. The total in the background of the whole—that indeed unlocks the mystery of existence. The whole and the total together. It has to be understood that the total is not identical with the whole. The total is the sum of the parts whereas the whole has no parts, it cannot be divided into parts. The whole is indivisible and therefore exists in its wholeness everywhere. Even structurally divided, every part contains the whole. As David Bohm, the scientist, says—every part even the tiniest, contains the whole. Without perceiving the whole if one strives to deal with the total he is bound to get frustrated. The total can be understood part by part—but whole cannot be split into diverse parts. If it is done then the experience of the whole is missed. This is what one of the scientists of our times John Wheeler said: 'Our increasing knowledge of details has brought us to an increasing ignorance of the whole'.

The intellect examines everything part by part and then assembles the finding of this inquiry—but it is no nearer the understanding of the whole. An intellectual understanding of the part is necessary but unless it is in the background of the perception of the whole—it has no meaning—in fact such an endeavour is likely to lead man astray. And this is what has happened and is happening in the present-day civilization built on intellect—but with no whisper of the heart. We may be great scholars but have not known the two and a half syllable of the language of love. We know the grammar of life but not the ecstasy of living. There is no passion, no over-flowing in one's life. We may be experts in knowing the rules of life and thus able to act in terms of the laws of property—but there is that *something* which is completely missing. The great Shankaracharya in his beautiful poem, *Bhaja Govindam* addressing the scholars says:

When the time comes as it is bound to come—the time for ultimate decision—your grammar which you are discussing will not help you at all.

We are experts in the language of grammar but know nothing about the language of life. It is this which has created an immense problem of the modern age—the most difficult problem. And this is the problem of human relationship. Science and technology have brought us together physically but we have created an enormous psychological distance between man and man. Our relationship has been vitiated by two factors—one, indifference, and the other interference. If we cannot interfere in the lives of others, then we are indifferent to them. There is no element of pure interest in the other beings. If I am interested then I am attached to that person and from attachment arises interference. It is this that has created vast problem of relationships at all levels—individual, social, national and international.

This is because there is no awareness of others. If there is awareness then it is restricted to certain spheres of life. There is no extensive awareness—this does not apply necessarily to the range and extent of relationship. It is not subject to duration either. One may have known a person for many years and the range of contact too may be varied. But the real relationship is that where one is aware of even the subtlest nuances of the life of the other person. The other person's life need not contain many aspects of expression—even the subtlest and the most quiet form part of awareness. This aspect of responding to the subtleties of life is completely missing because there is no direct relationship—it is indirect and totally soulless. One is satisfied if the requirements of rules and principles are fulfilled; there is nothing in the nature of an overflow in one's relationship with others—not even in the so-called intimate friendships. We are at best concerned with the rightness of relationship—right in terms of rules and principles. There is not even otherwise the awareness of the subtle aspects of life. Even otherwise our lives have become so tense and so sordid that we are not aware anywhere about the subtle and the intangible expressions of life and nature. Kabir said:

We have no awareness of the intangible and the subtle where real light shines—there is the atmosphere of prayer where exists no division of good and bad. (42)

No division of good and bad—is this then not a dull state? No it is not, for the division of good and bad is the creation of the human mind—mind living in the field of duality sees duality everywhere. And it is able to act only when duality exists. About awareness, Krishnaji says:



Awareness is from moment to moment, it is not the cumulative effect of self-protective memories. Awareness is not determination nor is it the action of will. Awareness is the complete and unconditional surrender to what is, without rationalisation, without the division of the observer and the observed.

Awareness is total surrender—and that is why we have called it the negative or the feminine quality. While awareness is negative, attention is positive. In their co-existence one has the intimation of the unmanifest and the intangible—and one has the capacity to express and manifest that which seems utterly inexpressible. In fact awareness and attention are the meeting of the unknown and the unknowable where alone truth or reality can be known directly, without any barrier whatsoever.

But can one be aware all the time? Is awareness a matter of exercise and practice? If so, would not that tire a person feeling utterly exhausted having no further energy to give total attention to that of which it has become aware? Krishnaji says:

... We cannot maintain total awareness all the time. How can we? To be aware from moment to moment is enough. If one is totally aware for a minute or two, and then relax, and in that relaxation spontaneously observes the operations of one's own mind, one will discover much more in that spontaneity than in the effort to watch continuously.

And so awareness is not a matter of practice—in fact when there is a moment of relaxation between awareness and attention then in that interval is the direct perception of what is. Awareness and attention have the characteristics of the negative and the positive. Ordinarily we regard the co-existence of the two contradictory factors as leading to nothing if they cancel each other. This is what the mind declares because of its habit of moving in a two track journey. But truth is not to be found in the 'either-or' path. There is a third way which is regarded by mind as paradoxical. And truth can be discovered only along the third way. In fact the approach of both Kabir and Krishnaji is of the third way. Kabir says in one of his poems which we quoted earlier but did not give the full version of it—

I am neither religious, nor irreligious, I am not a recluse nor am I attached, I am neither speaking nor am I listening. I am neither a servant nor am I a master. I am neither in bondage nor am I free. I

am neither detached nor am I involved. I am not away from others nor am I with them. I shall not go to hell nor will I proceed towards heaven. I have done all actions and yet I am away from all actions. Some rare individual can see this who resides within. Kabir refutes nothing nor does he assert anything. (43)

There is no better description of the third way anywhere in any literature of the world save in the writings of Kabir. To be aware of this is to show forth the qualities of awareness and attention at the same time. Saints and mystics have always spoken the language of paradoxes and that is why a man of intellect has always regarded it as meaningless. Krishnaji in line with the greatest and the sublimest mystics of the world also speaks the language of paradoxes. This so when he says that mind must be both masculine and feminine together, at the same time. Here the negative becomes the positive. It is not negation first and then the positive—both are together, at the same time. And this is where communion and communication function together. That is why Krishnaji very often used to say that communion is communication. There is no gap between the two—if gap arises then communication has no perfume of reality—it is just ordinary stuff with no quality of overflow in it. If the mind has been trained as an instrument of great capacity then it makes the overflow as the basis of communication. In this there is much that is communicated—but much more is only indicated. True communication, that which has a living quality is always suggestive, never exhaustive. It is like what the English poet in his well-known lines said, "Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard are sweeter". The spoken word draws one's attention to that which has remained unspoken—expression indicating what has not been expressed. This is the nature of beauty—this indeed is the nature of reality. The scholar wants to express everything—and thereby remain most often obtuse. The mystic leaves things unspoken and unexpressed. This indeed is the basis of the hidden mysteries spoken about in the ancient and archaic religions. They were not deliberately kept back by some so-called vested interests in religion. They were not kept hidden but remained hidden for want of insight. People evolved many methods and invented cypher systems to unravel the meaning of these mysteries—but they were of no avail. The hidden mysteries have to be unravelled by each person for himself. Their meanings can be found by the deeper insight which is not of fast moving intellect—but a perception of a completely different dimension. The higher dimension can be understood by the lower always in symbols and signs. Much of the



mythologies of the world have dealt the inner meanings of life in symbols and allegories. The *Puranas* of the Hindus are symbolic and allegorical descriptions of these hidden mysteries. They remain hidden to the eye of the intellect but reveal their meaning to the eye of the inner vision. This quality of insight is indeed the meaning of awareness. Krishnaji says:

It may last one second—you are completely aware one second, and the next second you may be inattentive . . . Do not say inattention must become attention—thereby you are introducing conflict, and in that conflict awareness and attention completely end.

We have concerned ourselves in this chapter with the factor or awareness which indeed is the ground in which attention is born. Attention without awareness is a mere projection, the usual game of the mind. It is once again the phenomenon which we have discussed—namely the observer-observed. Patanjali in his *Yoga-Sutras* says, 'The observer for its own continuity maintains the observed'.

One must become aware of the nature of the observed—and what are the motivations of the mind in maintaining it. But this demands an insight into self-awareness. It is this that prepares us for the experience of total attention. Awareness and attention are indeed the keys that unlock the secrets and mysteries of life—of all existence.





## XIV

### THE REGENERATING SILENCE

WE DISCUSSED in the last chapter the interesting subject of passion without motive. The state of motiveless may sometimes become the area of dry intellect—but the condition of passion also may degenerate itself into effervescent emotionalism like vapour it may aimlessly scatter itself in the atmosphere. We are concerned neither with vapour nor with ice—we want the living waters of life if human race is to regenerate itself. The teacher or the teaching that does not give the waters of life to the thirsty pilgrim is talking of purposeless giving. Kabir said in one of his poems:

I accept only that real teacher who gives to the pupil cup brimful of truth and love to drink—and himself drinks the self-same elixir. He enables one to remove the veil that has been cast over the eyes thus helping him to have a direct perception of truth. This is the vision of the whole wherein all is seen—not an isolated vision, and enables one to hear the music of the infinite wherein the division of joy and sorrow has been eliminated. Kabir says that such a person is not afraid of anything, for surely he has become fearless.

If awareness does not lead to the state of fearlessness then surely one has not come to the vision of truth. The first quality of the spiritual man mentioned in the *Bhagavad Gita* is fearlessness. Many turn away from awareness feeling they may perhaps come across something fearful. It is out of fear that one avoids seeing what is. And therefore awareness never flowers out into attention. Krishnaji says:

We must give our complete attention to the understanding of sorrow, and we cannot do this if we are trying to escape from sorrow, or if our minds are occupied in seeking the cause. There must be total attention and not oblique concern.

We look at things with oblique concern, indeed out of a sense of fear. We are unable to look at all—whether at things that bring happy tidings or things that bring sorrow. There is always an oblique concern lest events and happenings contain some ulterior aspects. Out of this constant fear we are never able to see things as they are. And when there is fear, we see only that which fear has projected. We are afraid that life will cheat us, that we can never trust what life brings. In its seemingly pleasing aspects we fear something is hiding, ready to jump up, taking us unawares. It is this constant sense of fear that does not allow us to look at anything with full attention. This fear has naturally brought about an unhappy relationship with all concerned—with things, persons and ideas. We are unable to see anything because we are strange to the act of attention. But one may ask: Attend to what? What does one see in an act of attention? Will it be pleasing or will it be painful? We want to know in advance and for this we go to teachers and scriptures—if only someone could tell us what is to be seen then we will see and look with attention—but here too there is an oblique concern lest the teacher's description may be misleading. Thus even here there is no complete attention—but a divided attention.

But the question is—what is one to see in a state of total attention? Can one not find an intimation of what is, on the basis of what one sees without the state of attention? As someone has rightly said—'What is seen is not, what is cannot be seen'. Why does one attach so much importance to total attention when what is cannot be seen and what is seen is not there? Kabir said in one of his poems:

The beyond is there and the nameless resides there. He who goes there will know, for it is not something which can be conveyed by words—it is other than what is said or heard. There is no form or shape—there is nothing to be seen—how can I tell you what it is. When thy grace is there then the beyond can be sung in a song. There is no creation nor dissolution, whenever you want to see you can see. Kabir says that it cannot be spoken in words nor can it be written down on paper—it is like the dumb man has eaten sweet—how can he say what his experience has been? (44)

How does the experience of communion come? Surely it comes in the hour of silence—deep silence. It cannot come so long as the noises of the mind continue—it is not the outer noise that must cease, it may or may not continue. But there is a deeper silence where the chatterings of the mind have completely ceased. It is not that the silence has been



imposed—the outer noises have not been stifled. They have ceased and deeper silence of the mind has descended. But why have the inner noises ceased? They have ceased because the conflict of the opposites have come to a stop. The inner noise always arises out of this conflict of opposites—it is the conflict of choice. When all choices have subsided, but why have they subsided? Because the mind itself has seen the futility of choice. The opposites seem to have the way of perpetuating them selves—each opposite gives birth to its opposite. When the mind sees the futility of this clash of the opposites, then the opposites drop away. And in their dropping away a deep silence descends where till now conflicts and clashes were going on. And here it is in this silence that the dawning of insight happens. In a remarkable book of Mysticism, *Light on the Path* it is said:

Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm—  
not till then.

The significance of this experience lies in the fact that the silence has followed the raging of the storm. In the raging of the storm the full potential of the energy has been evoked. The storm has vanished—but the energy persists. It is in the hour that this potential of energy is available, that the birth of the new takes place. During the storm many things may happen—new leaves and branches may come up—but not the blooming of the flower. It is when the storm has subsided and when the silence has descended that the birth of the new is vouchsafed. This silence may last for a minute or it may last longer—but it is in this silence and there alone that the flower of the soul opens—not till then. If that be so then what is one looking for when the silence has descended? There is nothing to look. It is a void. Nothing to look at and yet perceiving all—seeing everything. This is the great mystery or the void—or one may say one is looking at the fullness of the void. The fullness of the void is a paradoxical statement—the coexistence of the opposites and the contradictions. When they cancel each other in that interval caused by such cancellation the birth of the new is vouchsafed. Krishnaji says:

Silence of the mind is not achieved by action, it is not a thing to be gone after—it comes only when there is conflict.

These are moments of interval, short or long—between all happenings, between all events. There is an interval between two thoughts, two actions, two expressions. We are usually unaware of this



interval. We know about it only when noises have been stifled or violently or suddenly brought to an end. We know only of silence when noises have been ended. But there is silence between two expressions, two thoughts, two actions. This silence denotes the presence of energy—but for a moment not engaged in expression or manifestation. Krishnaji says:

Between two thoughts there is a period of silence which is not related to the thought process. If you observe you will see that the period of silence, that interval, is not of time, and the discovery of that interval, the full experiencing of that interval, liberates you from conditioning—or rather it does not liberate you, but there is liberation from conditioning. . . . There can be no silence as long as there is a seeker.

He says that the silence does not liberate you—but that liberation from conditioning is there. For so long as the *you* is there, there is no silence. It is the *you* or the seeker which is the maker of noise. To be aware of the interval where alone the voice of silence can appear. And so the awareness is of the interval of the void—but then what is there to see that it can create a state of full attention? Nothing to see and yet there is totality of attention—once again a mysterious and a paradoxical statement. Nothing to see and yet there is a breathless attempt—not merely a localised awareness but very extensive so as to pick up even the subtlest of the nuances. This awareness comes in extraordinary silence—the silence of the interval. It is only in silence that one can look. As Krishnaji says:

To discover anything you must look, and to look your look must be silent.

Attention is possible only in the hour of silence—or better still in the moment of silence. The experience of silence can be constant but never continuous. It is from moment to moment—there may be many moments, but each time it is just momentary. The interval that is spread out is no interval at all. The interval gives a momentary glimpse—but it is enough, one does not ask for the repetition of the moment. It is true what Sri Aurobindo said—"The moment sees it is the ages that toil to express". Why toil to express? For the momentary glimpse has been so rich that it demands many efforts to convey its richness. While awareness is momentary, it is attention which belongs to the duration of

time. But the momentary glimpse has been so vital and fascinating that the duration of time is not felt. Time does not hang heavily because of the vitality and the freshness of the experience of the moment. If one complains of the long duration of time, it indicates that one has had no experience at all.

But this awareness of the interval demands the existence of a total void—in awareness there is just the void not even the person who becomes conscious of the void. If the observer is there then there is no void at all, no silence—because the presence of the experiencer of the void creates noise by his very presence. Krishnaji says:

A man who would find a new life, a new way of living, must enquire, must capture the extraordinary quality of silence. And there can be silence only when there is death to the past, without argument, without motive, without saying—"I will get a reward".

The expectation of reward itself is the creator of noise. There is just the dropping away without a whimper—the dropping away of the past. When the mind realises that the carrying of the burden of the past is irrelevant, has no meaning, then the past drops away—it has not to be discarded. There is no renunciation of the past—there is just the dropping away even if it be for a split second, for an interval. That interval is the moment of the perception of truth. And the perception itself has such vitality that there comes into being totality of attention. But this is not an act of concentration. To try to concentrate is too immature and childish to exercise a pressure in the mind lest it moves away. Concentration is an exhausting exercise—and utterly self-defeating. In extensive awareness comes that moment when the mind stands still without any effort.

It needs to be understood that attention is not an act of concentration. Concentration emerges in the ground of exclusive awareness whereas attention demands the soil of extensive awareness. In concentration there is a shutting out of the unwanted influences while in attention there is a complete opening out to all impulses and impacts. Krishnaji says:

Any child is capable of concentration—give him a new toy and he is concentrated. Every businessman is concentrated when he wants to make money. Concentration which we think we should have in order to meditate is really narrowness, a process of limitation, exclusion.

Concentration needs an effort and this invariably results in



frustration. That is why we have to have all the time new toys. It represents what may be called a toy-psychology. These toys will differ from individual to individual. A child can be easily pacified by a change of toys—but toy he must have as otherwise he is restless. The grown-ups too have their toys—but they are not easily pacified because they invest their toys with psychological and associative memory. The toy by itself does not please them—there must be the psychological association within. The toys of the grown-ups are pictures and idols or images, they are *mantra* and ritualism, they are the scriptures and incantations. They too need to be renewed as otherwise the interest wanes—it has to be renewed by the change of toys. It is in this process that they go from *guru* to *guru*, from organisation to organisation, from one pattern of worship to another. But all these efforts at concentration are not acts of attention—the acts of total attention. For attention no outer conditions are necessary—they may be there or they may not be there. Attention comes from awareness. Awareness is passive whereas attention is active and positive. The two together release the source of energy which one needs for living—for creative living. It is silence which is the relevant ground for awareness—and the activity that emerges in this ground is indeed attention.

It is in silence that an organism discovers its way of regeneration. The organism whether physical or psychological must come to a state of vulnerability. An organism that is vulnerable is open and receptive. Awareness comes only to that organism which is vulnerable and therefore defenceless and totally open. Madame H.P. Blavatsky says that it is only “living truth” that can impart energy. A living truth is not a conceptualised truth—not an ideation or an ideal, not a dogma or a belief. It is not tied anywhere—it is ever free and therefore open to all impacts and influences.

In extensive awareness it is awareness which determines the next move of life itself—not the choice made by the mind. It is not a choice between the opposites. This is the choice of love—not of the selectivity of the mind. In mind's selectivity there is acceptance or rejection—in the choice of love there are no opposites—there is no acceptance nor rejection. There is no conflict, no clash of dualities. In love all dualities get transformed into polarities—its movement is not born out of choice but out of perception. Kabir says:

I have experimented with all types of treatment—but there is nothing like Love—even if a tiny particle of it enters the system, the entire organism is transmuted into gold. (45)



It is this transmutation which comes in the hour of attention born of awareness. The movement of this attention is inspired by love—and this indeed is the proper soil in which the beautiful flower of meditation grows. It is indeed true that the flower opens in the deep silence... call it the flower of love or call it the flower of spiritual life. As Krishnaji says: 'Without meditation there is no perfume to life, no beauty, no love'.

Awareness is the ground in which attention functions—and it is in the soil of attention that meditation grows with all its swooning perfume, with all its beauty. Awareness, attention and meditation are a process—they go together, not to be divided or fragmented into parts. It has no parts—it is the whole. It is in discovering the secret of meditation that one comes to the great perfume of life itself.





## XV

### UNTOUCHED BY THE KNOWN

PATANJALI in *Yoga Aphorisms* says that *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*—awareness, attention and meditation are one—they together constitute the real spiritual discipline. They cannot be split into parts—they go together. It is awareness which is *dharana*, attention is *dhyana* and true meditation is equivalent to *samadhi*. We have discussed the meaning of awareness and attention—of *dharana* and *dhyana* but it is *samadhi* which truly is a state of realization, of direct perception that needs to be understood. The definition of *dhyana* which Patanjali has given is “the observation of the stream of thought without interruption”. Thus it is verily indicative of the process of attention—not concentration as we have already discussed. Meditation is a much loaded word—it is used with different meanings, almost one contradicting the other. But truly speaking meditation in Patanjali is attention—looking at the stream of thought of which we have become aware. To be aware is to hold in one’s consciousness all nuances of life. But to look at what has been held in *dharana* is the meaning of meditation by Patanjali. Patanjali says:

Here to watch the stream of thought—the content of thought—without any interruption is *dhyana*.

The mind does not interrupt the flow of thought by saying good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. No breaking up of the flow by any judgment of the mind. The definition of *samadhi* given by Patanjali is of great importance. He says:

That alone is *samadhi* or communion where the essence of the thing is known devoid of form and expression.

*Samadhi* is indeed the right perception—where the thing in itself is

known without its form and encasements. The perception of the formless is meditation or *samadhi*. When the stream of thought is observed without any interruption then is revealed to one the real essence of things without any form or outer expression. The form always limits but to have a perception of the limitless is indeed *samadhi* which truly is a state of meditation—not merely attention. And so in Patanjali and in Krishnaji we find the parallels of *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* as awareness, attention and meditation. Krishnaji says:

Meditation is to find out if there is a field which is not already-contaminated by the known.

Meditation is indeed the discovery of the unknowable. That which has not been contaminated is the unknowable. In *samadhi* which is meditation there is nothing to see and yet the mystic perceives it. *Samadhi* is seeing something that has no form and no name. It is un-perceivable—and yet it is perceived. In *samadhi* indeed there is a contact with the unknowable. Kabir says:

*Samadhi* or meditation is simple and natural. I do not close my eyes nor do I plug my ears—with open eyes and with an irresistible smile I look at the exquisitely beautiful face of my beloved. (8)

Krishnaji says:

Meditation is that silence which comes into being when the meditator and his processes are understood. That silence is inexhaustible, it is not of time and therefore it is immeasurable. Only the meditator compares, judges, measures—but when the measurement is not, the immeasurable is... The ending of the meditator is meditation.

In the ending of the meditator there is the experience of the unknowable, the immeasurable. The unknowable has no name and yet it is expressed in myriads of names—with a thousand names it remains the nameless. The known can be and is expressed by a positive name; the unknown is described by a name that is negative—but the unknowable is utterly nameless—and yet when expressed assumes countless names. This is indeed the mystery of name and the nameless. In meditation the past is erased—not wiped away. And so in meditation and there alone there comes into being an action which is in the present—not



contaminated by the memory of the past nor by the anticipation of the future. Krishnaji once put a question—'Can an innocent person live in a world that is corrupt?' Our usual answer is that the world is not the innocent or the incorruptible. He is a misfit in the world where corruption thrives. But truly it is only the innocent man who can live in a world that is corrupt. Because he is himself—he has stepped out of the stream of life which corrupts and contaminates everything that it touches. The innocent man is not a part of the world—he is in the world but not of it. The corrupt man is swallowed up by the world and its corrupt practices. It is the innocent man whom the stream of the corrupt world cannot touch. And therefore he alone lives—truly lives.

In a world where the individual has ceased to exist except as a cog in the social machine, Krishnaji comes and gives to the individual his rightful place in the world—his creativity is given back to him—the one that he has lost in the welter and turmoil of life. Meditation is indeed based on self-knowledge—for in self-knowledge there is the end of the self. But what is self-knowledge? Is the self something static that one can go to it, possess it, analyse it and thereby come to self-knowledge? Can self be isolated from life and its movement? Is self something superior to the stream of living? Is self the unknown that can be known by the mind through its processes of meditation? Self-knowledge is indeed the central theme of all so-called spiritual endeavour. Is self itself a part of the flux or is it above this flux of life? Who can say whether life is a flux or it is in a state of stillness? Kabir says:

The waves of the sea are the sea, can there be any difference between the sea and the wave? With the sea it rises: When it subsides it is still water—how can they be different? The same water is called the wave and the subsiding of the wave is also called water. The same is true of the world—it is just *Para-brahma*. See yourself with the eye of Wisdom. (47)

Life is both still as well as flux—what else can it be? Flux and stillness are not the opposites—they together form reality. What is called the self is not different from the reality—and to know the identity of both is indeed self-knowledge. But thought creates confusion—it seeks something permanent and so creates a permanent entity. This has created the duality of flux and stillness—the permanent and the impermanent. And the impermanent is sought to be put aside and one goes after the search for the permanent. One discards the known and goes out in search of the unknown through the development of psychic

and super-physical powers. Brahman or truth is both, beyond the known and the unknown. Then how does one come to experience it. It is only through meditation—for there is no other way. As the *Upanishad* says—"there is no other path to go". Meditation is the only path where one comes to the experience of the unknowable—beyond the known and the unknown. Krishnaji says:

Meditation is the innocence of the present, and therefore it is always alone. The mind that is completely alone, untouched by thought, ceases to accumulate. So emptying of the mind is always in the present. For the mind that is alone, future which is of the past, ceases. Meditation is a movement, not a conclusion, not an end to be achieved.

Meditation is not an effort to achieve, to reach, to come to a finality. It is not an event but a process. To sit or not to sit in meditation has no relevance. One may sit or one may not sit at a stipulated time—that is absolutely immaterial. One may discard the traditional way of sitting in meditation and may become untraditional. But then the untradition becomes a new tradition—as meaningless as the former. Meditation is not an event—it is a process. A process contains events but with a discontinuity characterising intervals. Strictly speaking the awareness of interval is indeed the experience of meditation. The creator is an artist, and the genius of the artist lies not in the sphere of continuity but in the intervals of discontinuity. The awareness of this interval is indeed the experience of meditation. Krishnaji says:

It is only when the totality of the mind is still that the creative, the nameless comes into being.

In life there are intervals of silence—and an interval is neither the past nor the future, it is just the moment of living present—and it is there that truth can be perceived. And self-knowledge too comes in the interval, for the interval contains the whole. It is only when one is aware of the movement of the self that he suddenly, in an instant perceives the interval. And in that interval is truth or reality. There is neither the movement nor the non-movement. Nothing can be attributed to it—it is beyond all attributes, neither moving nor still—or one might say it contains both the stillness and movement at the same time. How can the mind of man understand this? But it is here that self-knowledge is vouchsafed to man. This is indeed the state of meditation or *samadhi*;



where in the formless there is the perception of myriads of forms. This is what the lord of death, *Yama*, said to Nachiketās in the *Katha Upanishad* when the latter inquired as to where he must go in search of the soul. He said one has to go nowhere for the eternal is—

within the transient, the living is in the unliving—the animate in the inanimate, the form in the formless.

In search of truth one has to go nowhere, for where he is he can experience it—what the English poet William Blake said:

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And heaven in wild flower,  
Hold infinity in the palm of the hand  
And eternity in an hour.

And so all seeking hither and thither for truth is meaningless for truth is here and now, where one is. It is neither the known nor the unknown but the unknowable. And the unknowable is seen when and where it manifests. *Samadhi* or meditation is indeed the perception of the formless. Kabir says:

Subtle is the way of communion; neither attachment nor detachment, it is like being immersed in the living waters of spiritual life. It is like a note within the melody just fish lives in water. It is giving up oneself instantly without any delay then arises the presence of spiritual realisation or the timeless communion. (48)

Self is not invisible—it is intangible and as such it is here and now, present everywhere at all times. If it were not so, it would lend itself to realization by means of what are known as spiritual or yogic disciplines. The intangible can be perceived only in the deep silence of meditation. Krishnaji says:

Silence has many qualities. There is the silence between two noises, the silence between two notes, and the widening silence in the interval between two thoughts. There is that peculiar quiet, pervading silence that comes of an evening in the country, there is the silence through which you hear the bark of a dog in the distance or the whistle of a train as it comes up a steep grade, the silence in a house when everybody has gone to sleep, and its peculiar emphasis



when you wake up in the middle of the night. ...the silence between two human beings when they have seen the same thing felt the same thing and acted. There is the silence of the mind which is never touched by any noise, by any thought or by the passing wind of experience. It is the silence that is innocent and therefore endless. When there is this silence of the mind, action springs from it, and his action does not cause any confusion or misery.

We have deliberately quoted this long passage for here we see the detailed and significant observation by Krishnaji of events small and big arising in the life of all of us. We are concerned with self-knowledge. How does it come? It comes from moment to moment—it cannot be accumulated. An accumulated knowledge is no knowledge—it is an act of storage by memory. Self-knowledge has to be in the present and comes in the act of observation. Observation has to be in the present—it has nothing to do either with the past or with the future.

But observation of what and where? There has to be the observation in the mirror of life. In the mirror of relationship. This observation does not come by sitting in a closed room and with eyes that are closed. It has to be done in the open. And one's daily life is indeed a mirror in which one can look at oneself. But look at what? This observation has to be of one's pattern of behaviour to start with. And this is easy and can be done without much difficulty. Just observe without any judgment, without any evaluation, without any resolve, verbalised or not, of doing something and of not doing something else. The mind utterly passive but receptive. The mind just aware of one's own behaviour pattern. This is a surface observation. One can then go deeper—and observe the apparent and underlying motivations behind these patterns of behaviour and action. Once again without judgment or evaluation, without saying it is good or it is bad. Just observe the motivations underlying one's actions and patterns of behaviour. And observation is its own discipline—no other discipline is ever required. In observation lies the secret of self-knowledge. Self-knowledge does not come by reading books and scriptures or by listening to teachers and psychologists. It has to be done by each man for himself—and in his state of aloneness. The self is not invisible—it is intangible and the intimation of the intangible comes only in moments of silence. It is untouched by the known—the sphere of the known does not contain it. It is indeed the unknowable—not knowable by the mind and its operations, not stored by any memory. It is ever fresh. The touch of the unknowable comes when there has been no touch of the known. The touch of the known contaminates wherever and whatsoever

it touches. When the touch of the known is not there then the threshold of the unknown is reached. And it is there on the threshold of the unknown that it and the unknowable meet. This meeting is a revolutionary moment... the touch of the unknowable on the threshold of the unknown is self-knowledge. This is to which the ancient wisdom of the East and the West refers when it says—'Man, know thyself'.

This is the great moment of self-realisation. In self-knowledge one steps out of oneself. And this is the real meaning of the experience of ecstasy. It is only when one steps out of oneself that self-knowledge comes. It is the striking of the hour—the hour of man's true releases from the bonds of the self.





## XVI

### THE JOY OF INNOCENCE

ONE OF THE MOST apt definition ever given of Yoga is in the writings of Sri Aurobindo wherein he says—"Yoga is a reversal of consciousness". H.P. Blavatsky, the co-founder of the Theosophical Society says in her *Voice of Silence*:

The rose must re-become the bud—the pupil must regain the child-state he has lost.

The rose cannot re-become the bud—it is an impossibility but this has been expressed in more acceptable terms when we are told that the pupil must regain the child-state he has lost. With the passage of time and with the advance of years the child-state of innocence is lost. The child is innocent out of ignorance—but the pupil must regain the state of innocence in the midst of all his knowledge and experience. This is what is demanded from a spiritual aspirant. And this is indeed the reversal of consciousness. In the course of time man's consciousness tends to accumulate—to gather experiences and retain their memories. It is this accumulation which makes the consciousness utterly opaque. Lost is the innocent transparency which hides nothing, which has nothing to cover up. This is indeed the essential characteristic of the child-state. A child is open, completely free from all desire to conceal. Because it is open, the child has a vitality which grown-ups lose with the advance of years. To get back to the transparency and the innocence of childhood is indeed the purpose of Yoga or spiritual life. The grown-up is not asked to be ignorant—but with the memory of events he is asked to keep no residue of experiences—psychological experiences. It is the residue that collects and gathers more and more moss thus becoming rigid and well nigh immovable. Rigidity is normally the condition of the adult's mind. It has no pliability, no flexibility. It is rooted in memories which he calls

by the respectable name—principles, ideations and even ideals. The psychological make-up of the grown-ups is very heavy, slow to move and that too under the impact of breath-taking happenings. The grown-up hardly moves—he is being moved by the force of circumstances. To maintain one's child-state in the midst of varying experiences seems very difficult—and this is what ordinarily goes by the name of resistance. One associates spiritual life with great amount of resistance—and it is this which exhausts and tires the man who strives to lead a spiritual life. It is the life full of control and resistance—all the way that is the story of the traveller on the path of spirituality. He is told that the road winds up the hill all the way. It is by constant and relentless control that one can negotiate this difficult path. Krishnaji puts a question:

Have you ever asked whether you can live in the world without a single control? Of your appetites, of the fulfilment of desires and so on—without a single breath of control? Control implies a controller and the controller thinks he is different from that which he controls. But when you observe closely, the controller is the controlled. So what place has control? Thought by its very nature being fragmentary divides the controller and the controlled.

To live without any control—this seems so contrary to all our accepted norms of spiritual life, the life of Yoga. Meditation is not a way of control—it is the way of flowering out. It is ceaseless control that makes a person hard, insensitive, impervious to the subtle and intangible influences of life. The man of control cannot respond to the finer aspects of life. And behind all efforts to control there is present all the time the element of fear. And how can the man obsessed by fear ever live? He exists, but has lost the joys of living. This is the tragedy of so-called spiritual life. One has to be all the time on the guard lest some undesirable element may creep in wiping away all that one is supposed to have achieved in one's spiritual life. There can be no naturalness, no spontaneity in one's process of living.

But no control, either external or internal, does not mean a state of disorder. Krishnaji speaks of order without system. A system denotes a pre-determined state, and, therefore an order which is according to a system, one which is based on a plan, an ideation or an ideal. Such order is completely mechanistic and therefore lifeless. But there is an order without a system—here things occupy their rightful place, not a pre-ordained place. Since life displays a state of wholeness the rightful place is that which is in perfect harmony with the whole. The thing is not



enforced into a place but occupies it naturally. Such an order requires no control and yet without control there is perfect order.

Once again no control means neither inhibition nor indulgence. But we are usually afraid if no control is exercised. We fear that things will run helter skelter without a controlling hand. In the field of education too Krishnaji gives a new guide-line—he does not speak of freedom through discipline—but discipline through freedom. Educationists would be afraid of following such a guide-line. They would expect a state of complete disorder if they were to follow that approach.

We have unquestioned confidence in the guidance of the intellect. But intellect is lost in the process of choice—and choice indicates indecision. But there is guidance by wisdom which never fails nor does it falter. It is in the interval between inhibition and indulgence. But what is wisdom?

A Christian hymn says : Wisdom mightily and sweetly ordereth all things. It is done both with might and sweetness. Its approach is not curt, not of dry intellect. The approach of wisdom is the approach of the heart—let it be remembered that heart is not emotion. In the approach of the heart there is perfect fusion of intellect and the emotion. And its action denotes might as well as sweetness—this is due to the fusion of the two as said earlier. A Sanskrit verse says:

Hard as an adamant and tender as a flower—who can know the workings of the life of a great man?

Hard and soft at the same time—not one after the other. This indeed is the quality of the heart. Some one has said that heart hath its reason which reason cannot understand. Wisdom is of the heart and it can never go wrong. It knows order without a system. It has discipline without any control whatsoever. It has no prior plan and yet it displays perfect and harmonious plan. Describing wisdom, Krishnaji says:

Wisdom cannot be bought, it is natural, spontaneous, free. It is not merchandise that you can buy from your *guru*, teacher at the price of discipline. Wisdom has nothing to do with knowledge. Wisdom is not accumulated memory, but is supreme vulnerability to reality.

For this mind has to be emptied of all accumulations, of good as well as bad, of holy as well as unholy. When the mind has been emptied of all that it has gathered then what arises is the void. Kabir says in one of his poems:

The body can be cleansed by going to pilgrimage, money too can be



purified by giving generously of it, but mind can be purified only when there awakens wisdom. (24)

Wisdom awakens—it is not gathered nor cultivated. And when wisdom arises in the ground of utter innocence—for that is what void indicates, then there is joy, indescribable. It expresses itself by gentle smile. Where there is no innocence there may be loud and vulgar laughter, it is vulgar and crude—but not the joy of innocence.

Kabir says that people have gone up to the door of the void—but they have not entered the door. Strictly speaking there is none to enter—but there is the immersion in the waters of the void. After such immersion the person returns—but it is not the same person. A completely transformed man emerges from that experience. And how does he convey his experience—in what language. Kabir says—he does convey but only with a smile, a significant smile, a smile of utter innocence. The transformed man constitutes the great mystery of the return of the pilgrim. He who returns is not the same that went to the door of the void. The void has transformed him—not any conscious discipline. He is bathed in the waters of the void—the waters of innocence. He is joy incarnate, the burden of all the accumulations has been suddenly lifted, he is as light as air itself. He moves without any resistance, for he carries no weight—neither the weight of the past nor the weight of the future. There is fundamental renewal. He is a true revolutionary. He can live in the world which is corrupt—for no corruption will ever touch him. He is indeed incorruptible. It is only the innocent man who can live in a world of corruption, of dishonesty, of malice and ill-will. His very presence is a benediction, a blessing to all.

Both Kabir and Krishnaji spoke of the arrival of such a human being. He acts but never reacts and so remains free from the bondage of *karma*. He is not the product of discipline and control—but of freedom. Freedom is its own discipline. Of such freedom were the great seers—both Kabir and Krishnamurti.

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# A P P E N D I X .

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Songs and Couplets  
of  
K A B I R

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- (१) जा घट प्रेम न संचरे, सो घट जान मसान ।  
जैसे खाल लोहार को, सांस लेत बिन प्रान ॥ (1)
- (२) हद हद पर सब ही गया, बेहद गया न कोय ।  
बेहद के मैदान में, रमै कबीरा सोय ॥ (2)
- (३) कबीरा खड़ा बजार में, लिये लुकाठी हाथ ।  
जो घर फूँके अपना, चले हमारे साथ ॥ (3)
- (४) ना मैं धर्मी नाहिं अधर्मी, ना मैं जती न कामी हो ।  
ना मैं कहता ना मैं सुनता, ना मैं सेवक स्वामी हो ॥  
ना मैं बंधा ना मैं मुक्ता, ना मैं बिरत न रंगी हो ।  
ना काहू से न्यारा हुआ, ना काहू के संगी हो ॥  
ना हम नरक लोक को जाते, ना हम सुर्ग सिधारे हो ।  
सबही कर्म हमारा कीया, हम करमन तें न्यारे हो ॥  
या मत को कोई बिरलै बूझै, सो अटर हो बैठे हो ।  
मत कबीर काहू को थापै, मत काहू को मेटे हो ॥ (4)
- (५) मन, तू पार उतर कहँ जैहो ।  
आगे पंथी पंथ न कोई, कूच मुकाम न पैहो ॥  
नहिं तहँ नीर, नाव नहिं खेवट, ना गुन खँचनहारा ।  
धरनी, गगन-कल्प कछु नाहीं, ना कछु बार न पारा ॥  
बार हि बार बिचार देखु मन, अंत कहँ मत जैहो ।  
कहँ कबीर सब छाड़ि कल्पना, ज्यों के त्यों ठहरैहो ॥ (5)
- (६) अवधू, माया तजी न जाई ।  
गिरह तज के बस्तर बाँधा, बस्तर तज के फेरी ॥  
काम तजे तें क्रोध न जाई, क्रोध तजे तें लोभा ।  
लोभ तजे अहंकार न जाई, मान-बड़ाई-सोभा ॥



मन बैरागी माया त्यागी, शब्द में सुरत समाई ।  
कहैं कबीर सुनो भाई साधो, यह गम बिरले पाई ॥ (6)

(७) अकथ कथा मन की बड़ी, कहहिं कबीर समुभाय ।  
मन को जो कोई परख ले, ताते काल न खाय ॥ (7)

(८) सोधा, सहज समाधि भली ।  
साँई ते मिलन भयो जा दिन तें, सुरत न अन्त चली ॥  
आँख न मूँदूँ, कान न रूँधूँ, काया कष्ट न धारूँ ।  
खुले नैन मैं हँस हँस देखूँ, सुन्दर रूप निहारूँ ॥  
कहूँ सो नाम, सुनूँ सो सुमिरन, जो कछु करूँ सो पूजा ।  
गिरह-उजाड़ एक सम देखूँ, भाव मिटाऊँ दूजा ॥  
जहँ जहँ जाऊँ सोई परिकरमा, जो कछु करूँ सो सेवा ।  
जब सोऊँ तब करूँ दण्डवत, पूजूँ और न देवा ॥  
शब्द निरन्तर मनुआ राता, मलिन बचन का त्यागी ।  
ऊठत बैठत कबहुँ न बिसरै, ऐसी तारी लागी ॥  
कहैं कबीर यह उन्मुनि रहनी, सो परगट करि गाई ।  
सुख-दुख के इक परे परम सुख, तेहि में रहा समाई ॥ (8)

(९) भीनी भीनी बिनी चदरिया ॥  
काहे कै ताना, काहे कै भरनी  
कौन तार से बिनी चदरिया ॥  
इंगला पिंगला ताना भरनी  
सुषमन तार से बिनी चदरिया ॥  
आठ कैवल दस चरखा डोलै  
पाँच तत्त, गुन बिनी चदरिया ॥  
साँई के सीयत मास दस लागै  
ठोक ठोक के बिनी चदरिया ॥  
सो चादर सुर नर मुनि ओढ़ी,  
ओढ़ी के मैली कीनी चदरिया ॥  
दास कबीर जतन से ओढ़ी,  
ज्यों की त्यों धरि दीनी चदरिया ॥ (9)

(१०) मोको कहाँ ढूँढे बन्दे, मैं तो तेरे पास में ।।  
 ना मैं देवल ना मैं मसजिद, ना काबे कैलास में ।  
 ना तो कौन क्रिया-कर्म में, नहीं योग बैराग मैं ।।  
 खोजी होय तो तुरतै मिलिहों, पल भर की तालास में ।  
 कहै कबीर सुनो भाई साधो, सब स्वाँसों की स्वाँस में ।। (10)

(११) मन बनियाँ बनिय न छोड़ै ।  
 जनम जनम का मारा बनियाँ, अजहूँ पूर न तौले ।  
 पासंग कै अधिकांरी लै लै, भूला भूला डोलै ।।  
 घर में दुबिधा कुमति बनी है, पल पल में चित तोरै ।  
 कुनबा वाके सकल हरामी, अमृत में विष घोलै ।।  
 तुम ही जल में तुम ही थल में, तुम ही घट घट बोलै ।  
 कहै कबीर वा सिष को डरिये, हिरदे गाँठि न खोलै ।। (11)

(१२) केसाँ कहा बिगाड़िया जो मुँडै सौ बार ।  
 मन को काहे न मुँडिये, जा मे विषै-विकार ।। (12)

(१३) हृद चले सो मानवा, बेहद चले सो साध ।  
 हद बेहद दोऊ तजे, ता कर मति अगाध ।। (13)

(१४) यह तो घर है प्रेम का, खाला का घर नाहिं ।  
 सीस उतारे भुँइ धरे, तब पैठे घर माहिं ।। (14)

(१५) अपनपौ आप ही बिसरो ।  
 जैसे सोनहा काँच मन्दिर में, भरमत भूँकि मरो ।।  
 जो केहरि बपु निरखि कूप जल, प्रतिमा देखि परो ।  
 ऐसे हि मद गज फटिक सिला पर, दसननि आनि अरो ।।  
 मरकट मुठी स्वाद ना बिसरै, घर घर नटत फिरो ।  
 कहै कबीर ललनी के सुवना, तोहि कौन पकरो ।। (15)

(१६) हिरदा भीतर आरसी, मुख देख नहिं जाई ।  
 मुख तो तब ही देखिये, जब मन की दुबिधा जाई ।। (16)

(१७) पंडित बाद बदन्ते झुठा ।।  
 राम कह्याँ दुनियां गति पावै,  
 खाँड कह्याँ मुख मीठा ।।  
 पावक कह्याँ पाँव जै दाहै,  
 जल कहि त्रिषा बुभाई ।।  
 भोजन कह्याँ भूख जे भाजै,  
 तो सब कोई तिरि जाई ।। (17)

(१८) समुझ देख मन मीत पियरवा ।  
 आसिक हो कर सोना क्या रे ।  
 पाया हो तो दे ले प्यारे,  
 पाय पाय फिर खोना क्या रे ।  
 जब अँखियन में नींद घनेरी,  
 तकिया और बिछौना क्या रे ।  
 कहैं कवीर प्रेम का मारग,  
 सिर देना तो रोना क्या रे ।। (18)

(१९) लिखा लिखी की है नहीं, देखा देखी बात ।  
 दुलहा दुलहिनि मिलि गये, फीकी परी बरात ।। (19)

(२०) घँघट के पट खोल, तोको पीव मिलेंगे ।  
 घट घट में वह साँई रमता, कटुक वचन मत बोल रे ।।  
 धन जोवन को गरब न कीजै, जूठा पचरंग चौल रे ।  
 सुन्न महल में दियना वार लै, आसन सों मत डोल रे ।।  
 जोग जुगत सों रंग महल में, पिय पायो अनमोल रे ।  
 कहैं कवीर आनंद भयो है, बाजत अनहद ढोल रे ।। (20)

(२१) शून्य शहर तक सब गये, शून्य के आगे नहीं ।  
 शून्य के आगे जे गये, ते मंद मंद मुसकाई ।। (21)

(२२) तन की भूख तो तनिक है, तीन पाव और सेर ।  
 मन की भूख अनंत है, निगलत मेरु सुमेर ।। (22)



- (२३) पूजा सेवा नेम-व्रत, गुड़ियन का सा खेल ।  
जब लग पिउ परसे नहीं, तब लग संसय मेल ॥ (23)
- (२४) तन पवित्र तीरथ गये, धन पवित्र कर दान ।  
मन पवित्र होवे तब, उदय होत उर ज्ञान ॥ (24)
- (२५) मन के बहुतक रंग है, छिन छिन बदले सोई ।  
एकै रंग में जो रमै, ऐसा बिरला कोय ॥ (25)
- (२६) लाली मेरे लाल की, जित देखों तित लाल ।  
लाली देखन मैं गई, मैं भी हो गई लाल ॥ (26)
- (२७) बूँद समानी समुँद में, सो जानत सब कोय ।  
समुँद समाना बूँद में, बूँधे बिरला कोय ॥ (27)
- (२८) प्रेम प्रेम सब कोई कहे, प्रेम न चीन्हे कोई ।  
आठ पहर भीना रहे, प्रेम कहावे सोई ॥ (28)
- (२९) जहाँ प्रेम तहाँ नेम नहिं, तहाँ न बुद्धि व्यवहार ।  
प्रेम मगन जब मन भया, तब कौन गिने तिथि वार ॥ (29)
- (३०) कनफूँका गुरु हृद का, बेहृद का गुरु और ।  
बेहृद का गुरु जब मिलै, लिये ठिकाना ठौर ॥ (30)
- (३१) हृद हृद पर सब ही गये, बेहृद गया न कोई ।  
बेहृद के मैदान में, रमै कबीरा सोई ॥ (31)
- (३२) तन की भूख तो ----- (देखें दोहा संख्या २२) (32)
- (३३) धरती फाटे मेघ जल, कपड़ा फाटे डोर ।  
तन फाटे की औषधी, मन फाटे नहिं ठौर ॥ (33)
- (३४) कर पकरै अंगुरी गिनै, मन धावे चहुँ ओर ।  
जाहि फिरायँ वो मिलै, सो भया काठ की ठौर ॥ (34)

- (३५) कागद लिखै सो कागदी, की व्यवहारी जीव ।  
आतम दृष्टि कहा लिखै, जित देखै तित पीव ॥ (35)
- (३६) जब मैं हूँ तब हरि नहिं, जब हरि हैं मैं नाहिं ।  
प्रेम गली अति साँकरी, या में द्वै न समाहिं ॥ (36)
- (३७) कनफूँका गुरु ----- (देखें दोहा संख्या ३०) (37)
- (३८) हृद हृद पर सब ही गये ----- (देखें दोहा संख्या ३१) (38)
- (३९) हृद चले सो मानवा ----- (देखें दोहा संख्या १३) (39)
- (४०) जा मरने से जग डरे, सो मेरे आनन्द ।  
कब मरिहौं कब देखिहौं, पूरन परमानन्द ॥ (40)
- (४१) पढ़ि पढ़ि के पत्थर भया, लिखि लिखि भया जू ईंट ।  
कहे कबीरा प्रेम की, लगी न एकै छींट ॥ (41)
- (४२) अगम अगोचर गमि नहीं, तहाँ जगमगै जोति ।  
जहाँ कबीरा बंदगी, पाप-पुत्र नहिं होति ॥ (42)
- (४३) ना मैं धर्मी नाहिं अधर्मी ----- (देखें पद संख्या ४)  
(43)
- (४४) अहद लोक वहाँ है भाई  
पुरुष अनामी अकह कहाई ।  
जो पहुँचे जानेंगे वाही  
कहन सुनन ते न्यारा है ।  
रूप-सरूप कछु वह नाहीं,  
ठौर-ठाँव कछु दीसे नाहीं ।  
अजर-तूल कछु दृष्टि न आई,  
कैसे कहूँ सुमारा है ॥  
जा पर किरपा करिहै साँई,  
अनहद मारग गावै ताही,

उद्भव परलय पावत नाही  
जब पावै दीदारा हो ॥  
कहैं कबीर मुख कहा न जाई,  
ना कागद पर अंक चढ़ाई ।  
मानो गुंगे सम गुड़ खाई,  
कैसे बचन उचारा हो ॥ (44)

(४५) सबै रसायन में किया, प्रेम समान न कोई ।  
रति इक तन में संचरै, सब तन कंचन होई ॥ (45)

(४६) साधो, सहज समाधि भली ————— (देखें पद संख्या ८) (46)

(४७) दरियाव की लहर दरियाव है जी  
दरिया और लहर में भिन्न कोयम् ।  
उठे तो नीर है बैठे तो नीर है  
कहो जी दूसरा किस तरह होयम् ॥  
उसी का फेर के नाम लहर धरा,  
लहर के कहे क्या नीर खोयम् ।  
जक्त ही के फेर सब जक्त परब्रह्म में,  
ज्ञान कर देख कबीर गोयम् ॥ (47)

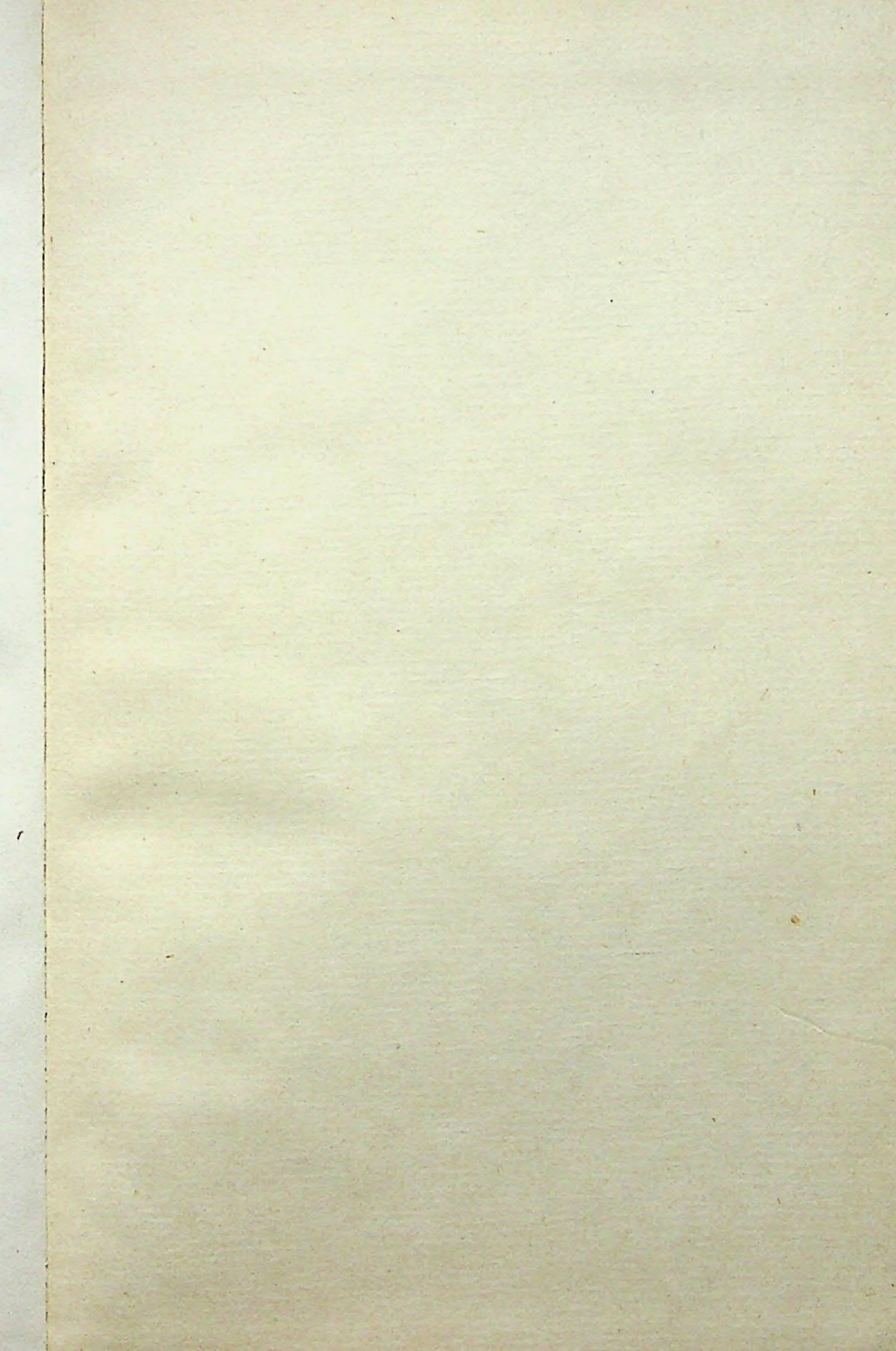
(४८) भक्ति का मारग भीना रे ।  
नहिं अचाह नहिं चाहना, चरनन लौ लीना रे ।  
साधन के रस-धार में, रहे निस-दिन भीना रे ।  
राग में सुत ऐसे बसे, जैसे जल मीना रे ।  
साँई सेवन में देत सिर, कुछ बिलम न कीना रे ।  
कहैं कबीर मत भक्ति का, परगट कर दीना रे । (48)

(४९) तन पवित्र तीरथ गये ————— (देखें दोहा संख्या २४)  
(49)

(५०) हीरों की ओवरि नहीं, मलयागिर नहिं पाँति ।  
सिंहों का लंगड़ा नहीं, साधु न चले जमाति ॥ (50)

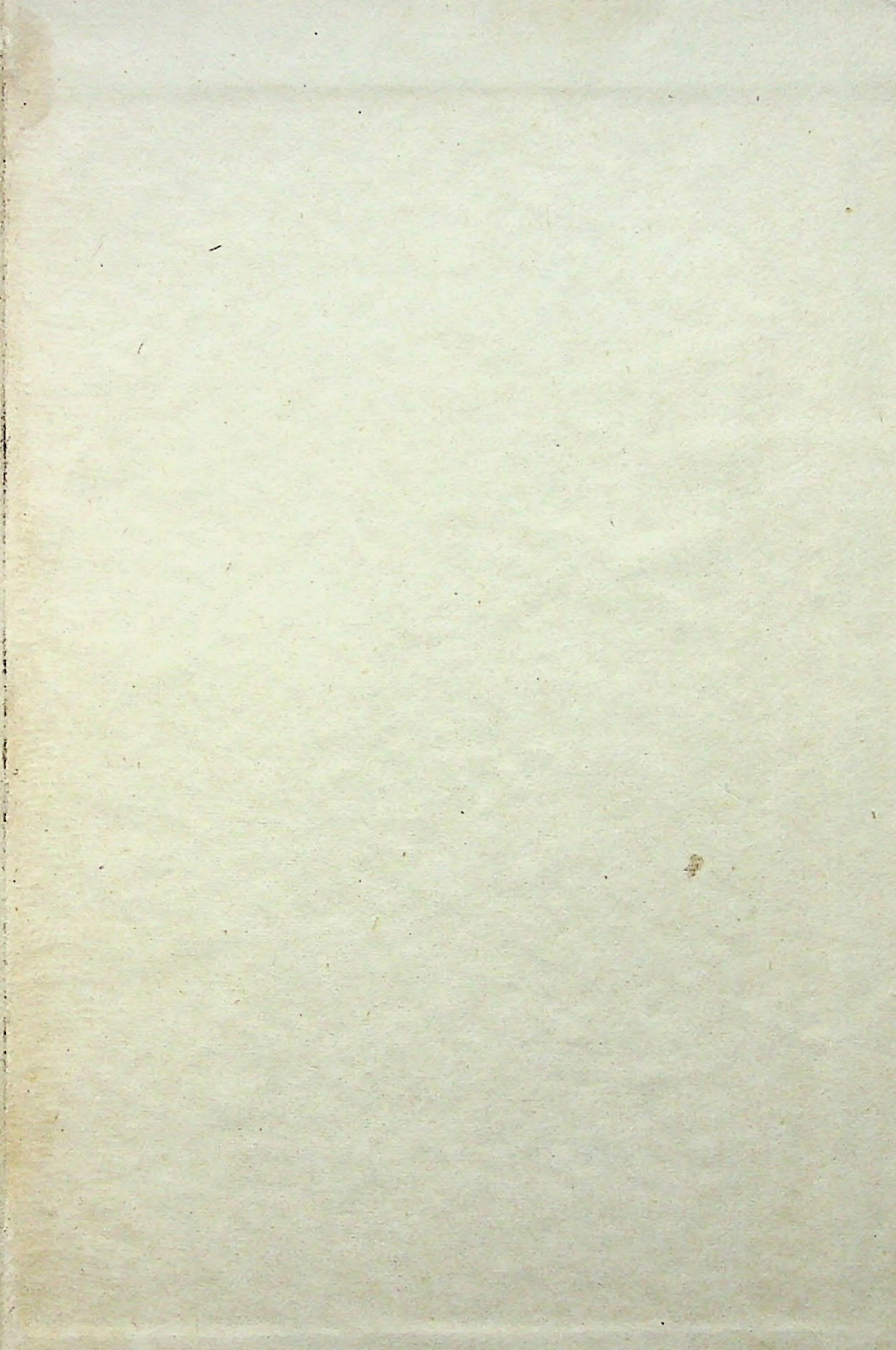












ISBN 81-208-0667-0



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